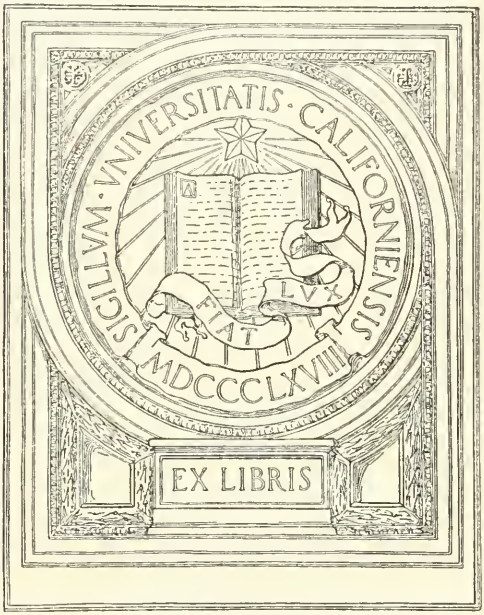
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AT LOS ANGELES



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Walter Bagehot

THE WORKS AND LIFE

OF

WALTER BAGEHOT

EDITED BY

MRS. RUSSELL BARRINGTON

THE WORKS IN NINE VOLUMES
THE LIFE IN ONE VOLUME
VOL. X. THE LIFE

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1915

"If we make ourselves too little for the sphere of our duty—if, on the contrary, we do not stretch and expand our minds to the compass of their object; be well assured that everything about us will dwindle by degrees, until at length our concerns are shrunk to the dimensions of our minds."—Burke's words chosen by James Wilson as the Text for the *Economist.*

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PREFACE.

An attempt to write the life of Walter Bagehot presents a few rather special difficulties. In the first place, it is thirty-seven years since he died; inevitably, therefore, much material which would have been of great value has already vanished. Most of his political friends, among others Sir George Cornewall Lewis, Lord Goschen, Lord Granville, and Lord Carnarvon, with whom Walter Bagehot corresponded, have long since been dead, and letters which these may have preserved during their lifetime are no longer forthcoming. Moreover, Bagehot himself was in the habit of destroying any letters he received except those from his parents, from my father, and from Mr. Richard H. Hutton. A few from others were saved after his marriage because they chanced to come into my sister's possession.

In 1852 Walter Bagehot left London and lived for some years with his parents at Herd's Hill; consequently the correspondence between them ceased. Even after his marriage, when he lived elsewhere, he paid his father and mother a few days' visit nearly every fortnight up to the time of his death, and would then talk over matters which had formerly been discussed in letters. My father died in 1860; and from 1861, when Bagehot again lived in London, he so fre-

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quently saw his friend Hutton that few letters passed between them. Hence the biographer's best material ceases many years before Bagehot's death.

There remain but two chief sources, the articles in the *Economist* and personal reminiscences. Of the former, two as a rule appeared every week during eighteen years (1859 to 1877); but though these are of considerable value, in that they note the subjects which were engaging Walter Bagehot's attention and embody his opinions on passing public events, they are naturally impersonal in their tone and character. The latter, on the contrary, are of so intimate and personal a nature that the question arises how far they can be brought within the focus of matter suitable for publication?

The Diary which my sister kept for sixty years has been of the greatest service to me in supplying dates and in recalling many events of our family life after Walter Bagehot entered it.

My grateful thanks are due to President Woodrow Wilson for kindly sending me his two brilliant articles on Walter Bagehot which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1895 and 1898, from which I have quoted several passages. I am also greatly indebted to Viscount Bryce, Lord Welby, Colonel Cary Batten, and Mr. Robert Dickinson for their valuable contributions, as also to Viscount Morley, to Sir Edward Fry, and to the executors of the Earl of Carnarvon, Earl Granville, Earl Canning, Viscount Halifax, Sir Charles Trevelyan, the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, William Caldwell-Roscoe, T. Smith Osler, and R. H. Hutton for their courteous permission to publish the correspondence with Walter Bagehot which still exists.

E. I. B.

HERD'S HILL.

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CHAPTER I.

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Page 18, line 23, *for* cresting *read* exerting.
,, 88, ,, 5 from foot, *for* Druro *read* Douro.
,, 98, ,, 12, *for* Peutapolis *read* Pentapolis.
,, 99, ,, 11, *for* at Clifton *read* in Bristol.
,, 101, ,, 9, *for* Unitarian *read* Dissenter.
,, 128, ,, 7, *for* for *read* by.
,, 144, date of letter, *for* 1884 *read* 1844.
,, 189, last line (note), *for* Enquirer *read* Inquirer.
,, 193, line 5 from foot, *for* Paris Royal *read* Palais Royal.
,, 199, lines 1 and 30, *for* Enquirer *read* Inquirer.
,, 200, line 20, *for* Enquirer *read* Inquirer.
,, 218, lines 20 and 31, *for* Taylor *read* Tayler.
,, 222, line 5, *for* Compton *read* Crompton.
,, 226, ,, 26, *for* adhering *read* adducing.
,, 256, ,, 17, *for* came *read* gave.
,, 257, ,, 5, *for* 9th October *read* 9 o'clock.
,, 258, ,, 4 from foot, *for* Bibbacombe *read* Babbacombe.
,, 259, ,, 4, *for* Audrey *read* Audries.
,, 282, ,, 4, from foot (note), *for* Druro *read* Douro.
,, 317, ,, 6, *for* 4th *read* 14th.
,, 348, ,, 5, *for* Asheton *read* Ashton.
,, 360, ,, 15, *for* Somerleage *read* Somerleaze.
,, 369, ,, 4 of note, *for* Orbey *read* Orby.
,, 377, ,, 3 from foot, *for* Cheques *read* Checks.
,, 382, last line of text, *for* H. I. Maine *read* H. S. Maine.
,, 401, line 2 from foot, *for* A. E. Freeman *read* E. A. Freeman.
,, 404, ,, 5 from foot, *for* two *read* too.
,, 408, ,, 23, *for* simply *read* simple.
,, 412, ,, 18, *for* Wolner *read* Woolner.
,, 413, last line, *for* Saville *read* Savile.
,, 430, line 14, *for* muted *read* mooted.
,, 446, ,, 10 from foot, *for* league *read* League.
,, 459, ,, 25, *for* and the *read* and his.

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PORTRAIT OF WALTER BAGEHOT . . . . . *Frontispiece*

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

HAD Walter Bagehot now been alive, he would have reached the age of 86. Every year robs the world of contemporaries who knew him personally. From the time he married my sister in 1858 till his death in 1877, I was constantly living with them, both before and after my own marriage. My sister's wish is that I should endeavour to give some written record of him as he was known by those who shared his home life, together with selections from the letters which he wrote and received. His mother kept not only all his letters to herself and to his father, but those which they wrote to him from his earliest school-days: and from these a very clear picture of his nature and character, as a boy and as a youth, can be gathered at first hand. His intellect developed early, and from childhood his striking individuality displayed itself. He was worshipped by both his parents, but the manly fibre of his character was enriched and strengthened rather than weakened by this worship.

Those who know Walter Bagehot only through his best-known writings have a way of referring to him, which to our ears has a curiously far-off sound. This is inevitable. The two short memoirs written by his intimate friend, Mr. Richard Holt Hutton, treat but of the bare facts of his family life, and do not even allude—for obvious reasons, Walter Bagehot's father being still alive when they were written—to a fact which, perhaps, influenced his home life more than any other, namely, his mother's occasional fits of insanity. The subsequent essays written on Walter Bagehot have a still less personal

note. The reviews which Sir Robert Giffen[1] and Leslie Stephen[2] wrote, and the address Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff[3] gave, did not touch on his home life, though all three writers were his personal friends. Mr. Forest Morgan,[4] Mr. Augustine Birrell,[5] the Rev. Dr. Kolbe,[6] the writer of the article "Walter Bagehot and his attitude towards the Church" in the Catholic Magazine and Review, *The Month*, April, 1896, Mr. Israel Zangwill,[7] President Woodrow Wilson, who wrote in the November number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, 1895, the Essay "A Literary Politician," and in the October number, 1898, another entitled "A Wit and a Seer," were all personally unknown to Walter Bagehot, belonging, as they did, to a later generation. Mr. Birrell's estimate does not create a complete picture of him, but as far as it goes the resemblance it recalls is very good. He says: "Every one who has read Mr. Bagehot's books will agree at once that he is an author who can be known from his books," and Mr. Birrell's own paper proves this up to a certain point. He adds: "Give the world time and it will be right, and the last person it will willingly forget is a writer like Mr. Bagehot, who loved life better than books"; and again, "to know Walter Bagehot through his books is one of the good things of life". It is quite clear that Mr. Birrell's appreciation of these books is on the same lines as the appreciation which his intimate personal friends accorded to the man. Still there is something wanting even here, for those who knew him in his

[1] Essay in the April No., 1880, of the *Fortnightly Review*, entitled "Bagehot as an Economist," also a Biographical Sketch for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

[2] Essay in the *National Review* of August, 1900.

[3] An address delivered when President of the Social and Political Education League, afterwards printed in the *National Review*, December, 1899, of peculiar interest to Walter Bagehot's relatives.

[4] See preface to the American Edition of Walter Bagehot's works in part reprinted in this edition.

[5] Lecture on Walter Bagehot given at Leighton House—afterwards printed in his *Miscellaneous Essays*.

[6] Appreciation which appeared in the *Irish Monthly*, May, 1908.

[7] Paper in the *Pall Mall Magazine*, January, 1896.

family life could not, I think, fail to recognise that Walter Bagehot himself was even greater than his books.

With reference to President Wilson's two estimates of Walter Bagehot, it was surprising to learn that they never met, so strikingly does he portray those attributes in Bagehot's writings which recall most closely the more personal side of Bagehot's life; but in a letter written at the time he forwarded the two numbers of the *Atlantic Monthly* containing his articles, President Wilson writes: "As a matter of fact, I never saw him, but I long had an enlarged drawing of the only likeness I ever saw, hanging in my study," and adds, "I have had, ever since my boyhood, a great enthusiasm for Mr. Bagehot's writings and have derived so much inspiration from them".

These writings speak for themselves. As regards the actual writing, there is scarcely a line which is difficult to understand. It would be true to add, I think, there is hardly a line that is not stimulating to the understanding. A striking point about all his work is that he not only has mastered his subjects exhaustively, but enjoys them keenly. You feel that his sympathy and lively interest are always thoroughly aroused; hence he discourses on every topic that allures him in a familiar, humorous fashion all his own. No author was ever more keenly alive to the folly of pomposity, or of any pose in style. President Wilson, speaking of Bagehot's writings, says: "They have all the freshness, the vivacity, the penetration of eager talk, and abound in those flashes of insight and discovery which make the speech of some gifted men seem like a series of inspirations. He does not always complete his subjects either, in writing, and their partial incompleteness makes them read the more as if they were a body of pointed remarks, and not a set treatise or essay."

Again, after quoting Bagehot's comparison between the English and American political arrangements, President Woodrow Wilson writes: "These are eminently business-like sentences. They are not consciously concerned with style; they do not seem to stop for the turning of a phrase; their only purpose seems to be plain elucidation, such as will bring

the matter within the comprehension of everybody. And yet there is a stirring quality in them which operates upon the mind like wit. They are a tonic and full of stimulus. No man could have spoken them without a lively eye. I suppose their 'secret of utility' to be a very interesting one indeed—and nothing less than the secret of all Bagehot's power. Young writers should seek it out and ponder it studiously. It is this: he is never writing 'in the air'. He is always looking point blank and with steady eyes upon a definite object; he takes pains to see it, alive and natural, as it really is; he uses a phrase, as the masters of painting use a colour, not because it is beautiful,—he is not thinking of that,—but because it matches life, and is the veritable image of the thing of which he speaks. Moreover, he is not writing merely to succeed at that; he is writing, not to describe but to make alive. And so the secret comes to light. Style is an instrument, and is made imperishable only by embodiment in some great use. It is not of itself stuff to last; neither can it have real beauty except when working the substantial effects of thought or vision. Its highest triumph is to hit the meaning; and the pleasure you get from it is not unlike that which you will get from the perfect action of skill. The *object* is so well and so easily attained! A man's vocabulary and outfit of phrase should be his thought's perfect habit and manner of pose. Bagehot *saw* the world of his day, saw the world of days antique, and showed us what he saw in phrases which interpret like the tones of a perfect voice, in words which serve us like eyes."

The English Constitution, *Lombard Street*, and *Physics and Politics*, the three complete works which have carried Walter Bagehot's fame far and wide, in no wise suggest the whole range of his powers and sympathies. The early essays do so perhaps to a greater extent; but it is only by taking his writings as a whole that we can recognise fully his many-sided nature and versatile gifts, and also best run to ground what explains the special quality of his genius, the core of its excellence, the power which enabled him to tackle with equal ability the wide range of subjects on which he wrote, the power which has been referred to as Shakesperian in its quality. Whether it was political

economy, religion, poetry, metaphysics, politics, or banking—all these various subjects, through his pen, become pungent with the same racy flavour, the same vitality and movement. The same thread can be discerned running through all he wrote, all he did, and all he was. If we seek farther and ask wherein lay the distinctive quality of this stimulating, vitalising power, we are confronted by his own words—"the sense of reality is necessary to excellence". The force of his imagination was governed and illuminated by this sense of reality. All the facts of life, all his feelings and ideas were lit up with a keen apprehension of it, for though he was a voracious reader he studied Life through contact with Life, rather than from books. Ideas, he felt, must be taken in, first hand; they must be inspired by contact with living creatures, living interests, genuine sympathies, genuine feelings, not diluted with human thought, human theories, or human prejudices, as they are prone to be when conveyed through books. The world was borne in upon him as in reality it passed before his eyes—and an engrossingly interesting world it was to him. He was seldom so completely preoccupied by his own thoughts as to lose the chance of a picture of real life being imaged on his brain. Intuitively and subtly he grasped the ways of this queer world of ours, those ways with all their inconsistencies, their quirks, their surprises; the ways that utterly refuse to be compressed into any rigid theories of what is expected or not expected to be, under any given circumstances. His sense of reality carried him far into strange aspects of things. His own home life with his parents taught him what but few have the chance of learning: indeed he was an emanation of the unusual in many respects. His genius, no less than his power of deep feeling, turned these rare lessons to good account. Into infinitely higher regions than those conceived by ordinary minds, did these lessons carry him, but even these regions he confronted with the same sense of reality. With the same vivid force of conviction with which he could master a fundamental principle of banking or of the English Constitution, he could affirm that "Mysticism is true," and apprehend the presence of that "Kindly light" which led John Newman,

who exercised so strong an influence over him at one time, to seize the reality of the spiritual life. It is by reason of this complete view of reality, learned from looking with unprejudiced vision into the entire world of facts, that Walter Bagehot manages to convey his own ideas to his readers with so much force of conviction.

Sir Robert Giffen, who acted as his assistant editor to the *Economist*, meeting him as a rule only in that capacity, but becoming intimate with him thereby, wrote in his contribution to the *Encyclopædia Britannica:* "Bagehot was altogether a remarkable personality. It is impossible to give a full idea of the brightness and life of Bagehot's conversation, although the conversational style of his writing may help those who did not know him personally to understand it. With winged words he would transfix a fallacy or stamp a true idea so that it could not be forgotten. He was certainly greater than his books, and always full of ideas." In a letter to my sister, written six months after Walter Bagehot's death, Lord Morley, referring to Mr. Hutton's article in the *Fortnightly Review*,[1] writes: "The article has recalled to my mind some of my conversations with him (Walter Bagehot), and in musing over them I feel strongly the impossibility of conveying to those who did not know him, the originality, force, acuteness, and, above all, the quaint and whimsical humour, of that striking genius. I am only glad to think that I have never failed to recognise and to enjoy his qualities as they deserve from my earliest literary days when I read the *Estimates*—a volume, by the way, which I hope you will reprint."

If this personality impressed his friends who, like Lord Morley and Sir Robert Giffen, met him outside the home life, with how much more force did it stamp itself on those who shared that life. With Mr. Hutton we have "felt somewhat unreasonably vexed that those who appreciated so well what I may almost call the smallest part of him, appeared to know so little of the essence of him. To those who heard of Bagehot only as an original political economist and a lucid political thinker, a

[1] October, 1887, reprinted in the complete edition as the "First Memoir".

curiously false image of him must be suggested."[1] To us that false image seems to be the only one that is reflected by many who quote him or speak of him in these quite later days. But how could the present generation, not having known him, conjure up the image of an entity so unique? How could it picture the singular power he had of making everyday matters in everyday life take an exciting, amusing aspect, while at the same time the grave, fundamental view of questions which underlie those everyday aspects, was never felt to be wholly off the scene, and was always to the fore when it was wanted? The idea generally formed of a sound, prudent person, and Walter Bagehot was eminently sound and prudent, is of one whose prudence takes a cautious and somewhat unimaginative direction. But, as Mr. Hutton says, in Walter Bagehot "the imaginative qualities were even more remarkable than the judgment, and were indeed at the root of all that was strongest in the judgment". The uncommon and unexpected combination of qualities in his nature defies, I fear, any attempt to convey easily to this generation what those who knew him personally felt to be his most marked distinction. The light was distributed so far, yet was so vivid when focussed.

It is notable that Sir Robert Giffen, his intercourse with Walter Bagehot having been restricted mostly to the discussion of economic questions, should have conceived so true an impression of the ever-growing, expanding nature of his interests and inquiries. He wrote: "Mentally Bagehot was at his best when he died, and he looked forward to many years of happy toil, both in finishing the *Economic Studies* and other work beyond. So far from becoming absorbed in economic science as he grew older, though his later writings happened to be almost all economic, Bagehot to the last gave me the impression of only passing through one mental stage, which being passed through he would again leave political economy behind. To his historical and descriptive account of English political economy he was likely enough to have added a history of political ideas, or at any rate some other work of general philos-

[1] See Memoir by Richard H. Hutton.

ophy, which had necessarily more attraction for him than the ordinary topics of political economy." [1]

I believe that before the end Walter Bagehot was rather reverting to earlier grooves of thought, and that, had he lived, he would have included in his future writings a class of subjects and impressions which characterised many of his earlier essays, in the days before his life had become somewhat choked with business. He was getting impatient, I think, of having to devote his best energies to matters from which religion, poetry, and art were excluded. His connection with the Metaphysical Society to which Manning, Ward, and Tennyson belonged, re-awakened trains of thought and speculation more in harmony with the trend of his feelings in those early days when Shelley and Keats were first delicious to him, and when Wordsworth and John Henry Newman were his daily food.

In *Physics and Politics*, when referring "to the loose conception of morals" which existed in primitive man, Bagehot writes ten years before his death: "In the best cases it existed much as the vague feeling of beauty now exists in minds sensitive but untaught; a still, small voice of uncertain meaning; an unknown something modifying everything else, and higher than anything else, yet in form so indistinct that when you looked for it, it was gone". More and more did Walter towards the end desire that the still, small voice should become clearer and more often heard, that the something of form so indistinct should become more distinct.

From father and mother alike he inherited a fervent sense of the reality of the spiritual life, and an equally fervent love for the beauty of nature and, so far as opportunity allowed, an appreciation of the best art. "We are souls in the disguise of animals," he writes in the Essay, "The Ignorance of Man". From the days when Walter was a very small boy, the three enjoyed together the delights of their West of England scenery. Lynmouth was most often chosen for the seaside holidays because of its great beauty, and together they became intimate with every rock and cranny in the place, appropriating in

[1] Sir R. Giffen's article in the *Fortnightly Review*, April, 1880.

fancy special spots as their very own. Herd's Hill, their home, was worshipped by Walter as a boy. Countless letters exist—written by him from Bristol College and from University College, London, and from his parents to him, showing the romantic love they all felt for this Herd's Hill. His father writes to him in 1843, Walter being then seventeen: "I do not know what you will say when you hear that some unsparing hand has commenced the work of destruction at Wick (one of the many beautiful views seen from the lawns at Herd's Hill) and is cutting down the trees we have so long valued as one of our greatest ornaments. We shall be able to bear it I dare say; and I live in hope of finding many beauties beyond them. At all events we must have a beautiful home, while a virtuous and happy one."

A month or two before his death, Walter and I (we were staying with him and my sister in their London house, 8 Queen's Gate Place) made a compact. I was to administer experiences of an artistic—he, an experience of an intellectual kind. He had not liked any music he had hitherto heard. He had even felt music to be irritating. From babyhood it had been associated in his mind with anything but fertilising influences, having been chiefly allied to a pathetic feature in the family life. But when he was fifty-one he said to me: "You must take me to hear Joachim; I think I might understand Joachim". A few days before he took his last journey to Herd's Hill, he said: "You must take me to see Watts—I should like to see the outside of the person who does these things". Deplorable indeed was it that this visit never came off. Watts, with his quick eye and apt discernment, would not only have wished to paint what in Walter was pictorially noticeable, but would have discovered something of him as he was below the surface—and we might have possessed a portrait which would have suggested that something. In return for the Joachim and Watts's visits, Walter was to have taken me one Sunday to see George Eliot. I had been asked by Watts to meet her in his studio, but I had not dared on that occasion to propose a visit to her, though I had been inspired by my friend Mrs. Nassau Senior, with a wish to do so. Walter

Bagehot was in the habit of attending George Eliot's gatherings on Sunday afternoons at The Priory, St. John's Wood. Bagehot recognised the value of William Morris's art, and my sister and he had their London house furnished and decorated by his firm. It was written of him two years after his death:[1] "Few men of our own time have combined in so eminent a degree the useful and the beautiful. The value of such a mind is not to be measured by the amount of adulation poured upon it by the press. Thinking men recognise a gap which no other writer fills."

Life had been a tremendous rush ever since he had married. He spent much of it in the train, between Clevedon and Bristol, London and Langport. Towards the end it quieted down somewhat, and he then felt the want of some echo of these things which had been nurtured in the early days, developed into the expanded form in which they were then revealing themselves to his matured taste. His nature was always annexing—and annexing what was best. To quote a saying of W. R. Greg's, he was "a spring and not a cistern,"—not as Pitt, who "never grew,—he was cast". Walter Bagehot had, to use his own expression, above all things an "experiencing nature". He was always learning, always expanding; and this generation, if it wants to know Walter Bagehot through the only means it can know him, should read all his books—and read them as they were written; remembering always that the record is not quite complete. From circumstances in his life hereafter to be related, he chose banking as his actual profession, and thus placed himself in a groove which narrowed, not his mind or nature, but for a time his opportunities. When later the work of editing and managing the *Economist* devolved on him, he had so full a life of finance and politics, that it is a marvel his three famous books were ever achieved. But much was left on the lines that in early days found an outlet in literature which remained unrecorded when he died. Hence it is that those who knew him best think of the man as greater even than his books, for in per-

[1] *Fraser's Magazine*, March, 1879.

sonal contact, and in conversation with him, a vein in that genius was enjoyed which never found a fully developed expression in any book he wrote, whatever hints of it may be traced in the early essays. It would be a forlorn hope for me to attempt to convey any adequate suggestion of this vein in his genius, which those intimate with him felt as still waiting to be expressed in his writing, or to describe to those who never knew him, the rare and stimulating quality of this personal influence on those with whom he lived; but the endeavour to do so may serve as a tribute to the great qualities of his heart and character.

It is perhaps especially desirable at the present time for reasons arising from the political situations of the last few years, and the Constitutional changes which have recently been brought about, that an opportunity also should be given of gathering from the entire range of his writings what in reality was the distinctive trend of Walter Bagehot's political views. During the various crises of the last two years, hardly a week passed without quotations from his books appearing in the newspapers, for the purpose of enforcing some party argument. But Walter Bagehot was no bigoted partisan of either side—Liberal or Conservative; the Conservative, no less than the Liberal side, would consult him. Sir Stafford Northcote, no less than Mr. Gladstone, would seek his counsel on questions of importance. When Bagehot lost the election at Bridgwater in 1866 he consoled himself with the belief that parliamentary work would not have suited him. Into neither side of the House could he have fitted himself quite comfortably. To use his own words, he was "between sizes in politics". He was distinctly not a party man, though with eager interest, as will be seen in his letters, he entered into the great contest between the classes which ended in the passing of the Reform Bill, a measure which aroused strong sympathy in his father. On 1st May, 1846, at the age of twenty, he writes to his old school-fellow, Sir Edward Fry: "I do not know whether you are much of a free-trader or not. I am enthusiastic about, am a worshipper of, Richard Cobden. I am not very nervous about Lord Stanley and the House of Lords." Again in the

same letter he writes: "You ask, is England going downhill? I cannot think so. I see a gradual progress in history, especially in the History of England. I cannot suppose that this is now going to stand still. There never yet was a nation while getting freer and freer, more and more intellectually instructed, and morally better and better, which ever stopped. I think England is in this condition; the progress of the Arts of life, of material civilisation, has been for two centuries of unexampled rapidity, and I think that the mental progress has been also vigorously carried forward, though I do not think that it has been *equally* quick. The lower classes of this country are ignorant, but the last generation is better than the preceding ones, *our* generation more instructed than the last; it is for us to see to the next. The most hopeful sign of our times is seeing men like Burns and Ebenezer Elliott showing the falsity of that scale of merit, that is graduated according to property, and making the rich to know that there are richer than they."

Six years after he wrote this letter, Walter Bagehot published his essay on "Shakespeare—The Man," and in making out what were Shakespeare's political views he clearly proves what were his own concerning "simple democracy". After quoting the conversation between "George" and "John" respecting Jack Cade's notion that the laws should come out of his mouth [1] ending with John's exclamation, "I see them! I see them!" he continues: "The English people did see them, and know them, and therefore rejected them. An audience which, *bona fide*, entered into the merit of this scene, would never believe in everybody's suffrage. They would know that there is such a thing as nonsense, and when a man has once attained to that deep conviction, you may be sure of him ever after. . . . He (Shakespeare) speaks in praise of a tempered and ordered and qualified polity, in which the pecuniary classes have a certain influence, but no more, and shows in every page a keen sensibility to the large views and high-souled energies, the gentle refinements, and disinterested desires, in which those classes are likely to be especially deficient."

[1] 2 *King Henry VI.* IV. 2.

Fourteen years later Bagehot, with forcible argument, expressed his views on the subject of unduly lowering the franchise. Early in January, 1866, politics were started by Mr. Bright making a speech on reform at Rochdale. Bagehot wrote fifteen articles in the *Economist* during the course of that year on this subject which was uppermost in people's minds. The manner in which it was treated by both sides of the House furthered much discussion. Bagehot took objection to Mr. Bright's speech at Rochdale and reiterated the arguments he had always consistently advanced. He maintained that though every class should be represented in the councils of the nation, by unduly lowering the franchise you commit an injustice towards the class whose interests would thus cease to be represented, owing to the enormous majority of the poorer classes. "You must pass such a Bill," he writes, "that the class now excluded from the representation shall no longer be excluded; and you must pass such a Bill that the classes now included in the representation shall still be included, and shall be in no danger of gradual exclusion by the further extension of your method. . . . Mr. Bright, like the Radical party in general, in their absurd superstition as to the vote, either forgets or contrives to ignore, the only purpose for which a vote is really useful—representation. He proposes quite rightly to takes guarantees that no class shall be excluded from the polling booths, but he is by no means anxious to take any guarantees that no class shall be excluded from being fully heard in the House."

Walter Bagehot identified himself completely with the principles of Free Trade, by becoming the editor of the *Economist*. In 1843, with the co-operation of the then Lord Radnor, my father, Mr. James Wilson, founded the *Economist* newspaper. The object of this venture, mooted first at Lord Radnor's dinner-table, was to spread the principles and doctrines of Free Trade. When Bagehot accepted the position of Director of the *Economist* he carried on the work of the paper entirely on the lines on which my father conducted it, but no passion of partisanship can be traced in any of Walter Bagehot's articles. He speaks from a different

platform, certainly from one commanding the view of a more extended intellectual horizon, than that ever surveyed by party prejudice. The eager, combative spirit, which, as a rule, characterises the discussion of party questions by party men, is never found in any of Walter Bagehot's political writings. With stimulating vitality, together with a wise impartiality, he treated any subject which commended itself to him. He did not need the incentive of battle to awaken his zeal for elucidating a sound philosophical view of any question of public interest. He advocated great deliberation with regard to all public questions. He was keenly alive to the danger of precipitate, rash action. Two years before his death, Bagehot pronounced very distinctly his opinion on the necessity of deliberation and a long discussion before changes were made in England. He writes: "All changes in England should be made slowly and after long discussion. Public opinion should be permitted to ripen upon them. And the reason is, that all the important English institutions are the relics of a long past; that they have undergone many transformations; that like old houses which have been altered many times, they are full both of conveniences and inconveniences which at first sight would not be imagined. Very often a rash alterer would pull down the very part which makes them habitable, to cure a minor evil or improve a defective outline." [1]

Some years after Bagehot's death Lord Goschen wrote in a letter to my sister: "In what dim distance lie the days when we met at Strawberry Hill. How few of the politicians who congregated there still remain. How changed is the whole political and social world. I wonder whether if he were still alive, your husband would think that I had grown 'too conservative'. I do not think that I have changed much. I still hold most of the opinions which I held when, with your husband, I was classed as moderate left centre Liberal. But Conservatives and Radicals have both shifted their ground entirely."

At the age of twenty-five Bagehot published "Letters on

[1] "The Public Worship Regulation Bill," *Economist*, July, 1875.

the French *Coup d'Etat* of 1851". In these he explains, very amusingly, the advisability, even the necessity, there had been for Louis Napoleon to take despotic action for the interests of the people at large, being fully impressed by the fact that "people at large" were singularly attached to their own somewhat sordid interests. In the third letter he describes two ideas which must be first got rid of in discussing any constitution. One of these he cites as being the "pernicious mistake which creeps out in conversation and sometimes in writing, that politics are simply a sub-division of immutable ethics; that there are certain rights of men in all places and all times, which are the sole and sufficient foundation of all Government; and that accordingly a single stereotyped Government is to make the tour of the world; that you have no more right to deprive a Dyak of his vote in a 'possible' Polynesian Parliament than you have to steal his mat". Burke, Walter Bagehot goes on to say, taught "the world at large that politics are made of time and place, that institutions are shifting things, to be tried by, and adjusted to, the shifting conditions of a mutable world, that, in fact, politics are but a piece of business, to be determined in every case by the exact exigencies of that case; in plain English, by sense and circumstance". He continues by saying that of all immutable circumstances "by far and out of all question the most important is *National Character*".

Walter Bagehot knew that party government in England must mean a certain amount of compromise, as it is that which suits the national character with regard to all business transactions, and that, however emotional may be the oratory with which measures are manipulated in the House of Commons, "politics are but a piece of business," and "sense and circumstance" determine the upshot. But he knew also that no genuine passion ever rests satisfied which is treated in a spirit of compromise, and that the evidence of passion, in party political strife, means, as a rule, not a struggle for the ascendancy of any deep conviction or of immutable principles, but for that of passing interests and class prejudice.

Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff was of opinion that the House

of Commons was not the right place for Walter Bagehot. "He was," he said,[1] "in his proper place as a deeply interested spectator and critic of public affairs." And as to his seemingly intuitive knowledge of the nature of politics and politicians, Sir Mountstuart continues: "What could have been better, even as the verdict of 'an old Parliamentary hand,' for instance, than his words about Sir Robert Peel, written in 1856, when he was only thirty: 'No man has come so near our definition of a Constitutional Statesman—the powers of a first-rate man and the creed of a second-rate man!' Or again: 'A constitutional administrator has to be always consulting others, finding out what this man or that man chooses to think; learning which form of error is believed by Lord B., which by Lord C., adding up the errors of the Alphabet and seeing what portion of what he thinks he ought to do, they will all of them together allow him to do!' Or again: 'The most benumbing thing to the intellect is routine, the most bewildering is distraction; our system is a distracting routine.' A young man looking at the House of Commons from the outside rarely thinks of that. I am sure I never did; but I have known even Mr. Gladstone, at the height of his power, when the House had met on a Thursday in February, say when we rose on Friday night: 'Thank God! there is one week of the session over;' and a colleague sitting by me on the Treasury Bench once remarked to me: 'It is wishing one's life shorter by six months; but does not one wish on this the first night of the session that it were the last'."

When Walter Bagehot's old school-fellow was returned for Gloucester as a Conservative, he wrote:—

"My dear Wait,

"I congratulate you most sincerely. It is awful this Conservative reaction; we shall be all in chains directly—nevertheless I congratulate you. I think you will really like

[1] "Walter Bagehot": an address delivered by the Right Hon. Sir M. E. Grant Duff, E.C.S.I., F.R.S., President of the Social and Political Education League, December, 1899.

the life, which a great many people do not *in fact*, though no one ever says so."

"Bagehot," writes Sir Robert Giffen in his contribution to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "had great city, political, and literary influence, to which all his activities contributed, and much of his influence was lasting. In politics and economics especially his habit of scientific observation affected the tone of discussion, and both the English Constitution and the Money Market have been better understood generally because he wrote and talked and diffused his ideas in every possible way. He was unsuccessful in two or three attempts to enter Parliament, but he had the influence of far more than an ordinary member, as director of the *Economist* and as the adviser behind the scenes of the Ministers and permanent heads of departments who consulted him." Walter Bagehot has been called "a sort of supplementary Chancellor of the Exchequer," and this was equally true whichever party was in power. "Though," continues Sir Robert Giffen, "he belonged to the Liberal party in politics, he was essentially of conservative disposition, and often spoke with sarcastic boastfulness to his Liberal friends of the stupidity and tenacity of the English mind in adhering to old ways as displayed in city and country alike. He early gave up to literature the energies which might have gained him a large fortune in business or a great position in the political world. To write books a man must give up a good deal; and, as a man of letters, there is no doubt he made the sacrifice for himself willingly and cheerfully, following his true bent without turning to right or left."

One side of his nature made, I think, this sacrifice the easier. The influence of his genius, the notably independent attitude of his mind, his power of sympathy, and his gifts as a brilliant talker, never led him to disguise to himself the fact that these alone did not necessarily bring the luck of very obvious worldly success, that, unless the aspirant is born under a peculiarly happy star, much of the active working which secures such success is based on a certain contriving and disposing of the events in life, a certain yielding to the weakness of those in power, a certain suppression of independent

judgment and action, in other words on a certain abnegation of moral dignity. In every sense Walter Bagehot was finely pointed. He would never have consented to earn any of the good things of this world at the cost of entire independence and freedom of thought and action. Political and social climbers are not unfrequently obliged to lower their standard in order to attain their ends: Walter Bagehot thought such ends hardly good enough to make it worth while to make what to him would have been a repugnant sacrifice.

From Berlin, in 1848, Mr. Hutton wrote a letter to Walter Bagehot—then aged twenty-two—in which he expresses the high expectations he has formed respecting his future career. He assures him that he is by no means blind to his defects and goes on to say: "I do not take a one-sided view of your character. . . . But this does not in the least diminish my faith and expectation that you have a most important influence to exercise over us all, I hope as a *Nation*, one which I cannot *bear* to think should be diminished or destroyed either by the modifying or incapacitating influence of bad health on genius such as yours. I think myself I understand your character pretty thoroughly, both its wants and its powers, at least I feel as if I could analyse it as well as any character I know; and certainly I know none so capable of cresting the highest permanent influence over England. I think your influence is essentially more fitted to be exerted over bodies of men, than over *persons;* through institutions, by reason and moral power, rather than through individuals by authority and persuasion and affectionate powers. Even in reasoning you can adapt yourself far better to convince mankind than to alter individual views, because you generally choose the natural universal road to Truths, even Truths the most difficult and obscure and often seem unable to wind along the particular paths of fallacy or truth by which specially contended minds so often reach their own views. . . .

"This is partly what makes me think your genius is fitted for a statesman's position; and I cannot help trusting that your influence may be so wide and essential in our national distress and need, as to give you a *permanent* place in our

history. It is strange I should feel such confidence as to this; that you are fitted for it, I feel *certain*. My only fear and anxiety is about your health and prudence."

Writers of to-day not unfrequently remark that Walter Bagehot's genius was not recognised during his lifetime. In one sense, but in one sense only, this is true. Undoubtedly it had not so wide a recognition as might have been expected; but what was denied it by the many was most generously accorded by the few who had both the power and opportunity to appreciate it. Now, through the sifting of the mighty sifter, Time, the few have grown into the majority. Why an obvious fame was not more quickly accorded may partly be accounted for by the fact that Walter Bagehot was but fifty-one when he died, and that the quality of his intellect and character were of too original a mould to be taken at their rare value at once by a public who only readily recognises great qualities in the form it is accustomed to value. Moreover Walter Bagehot was callous of undistinguishing praise, and so strong was the influence of his individuality, that his views about himself as a rule, infected his nearest friends. The modest attitude he took with regard to his writings and the effect they produced on the public, was wont to be adopted by those who knew him intimately. His value, they felt, was of a self-contained quality. It neither courted nor desired any fanning by popular applause. Of his old friend Crabbe Robinson, Bagehot writes: "I do not mean that he was universally popular; it would be defacing his likeness to say so". "The *prowling* faculties," he writes in his essay on Bishop Butler, "will have their way. Those who hunger and thirst after riches will have riches, and those who hunger not, will not." So with reputation—Walter Bagehot was no *prowler* after popular fame, he did not hunger after it, so had it not during his lifetime, though, to quote Lord Bryce's words, "it was with no small surprise that those who knew him, perceived how little the world seemed to know the loss it sustained when his keen, bright, fertile intellect left us". In the rush and tear of an over-crowded world those who are indifferent to the crowd's applause are not, as a rule,

applauded by the crowd, till some one wiser than it starts the drums and trumpets.

Writing to my sister before they married, Bagehot says: "The only thing I maintain is that I have a *spring* and energy in my mind which enables me to take some hold of good subjects and makes it natural and *inevitable* that I should write on them. I do not think I write well, but I write, as I speak in the way (I think) that is natural to me, and the only chance in literature, as in life, is to be yourself. If you try to be more you will be less. But do not take up any extravagant notions of my abilities or you will be disappointed when you find out your mistake. . . ."

Speaking of reputation he writes in another letter to my sister from Claverton, our home when we first knew him: "I came here to talk 'Crises and Currency' for an article in the next number of the *National*. I feel I should like much more to have a reputation about these subjects because you would like it. Of course I should have always liked it somewhat; but reputation is not my strongest temptation. I think it a very healthy and proper object of desire—the *wish* to be estimated at your value is nearly as important for good in a character, as the wish to be estimated at *more* than your value is for evil; but I am not exceedingly prone to it myself."

When Walter Bagehot died all the principal newspapers bore witness to his distinguished position among the wise men of his generation. But fame—as the word fame is generally understood—was but tardily accorded. Eighteen years after his death President Wilson writes: "Walter Bagehot is a name known to not a few of those who have a zest for the juiciest things in literature, for the wit that illuminates and the knowledge that refreshes. But his fame is still singularly disproportioned to his charm; and one feels once and again like publishing him at least to all spirits of his own kind. It would be a most agreeable good fortune to introduce Bagehot to men who have not read him. To ask your friend to know Bagehot is like inviting him to seek pleasure. Occasionally a man is born into the world whose mission it evidently is to clarify the thought of his generation, and to vivify it; to give

it speed where it is slow, vision where it is blind, balance where it is out of poise, saving humour where it is dry—and such a man was Walter Bagehot."

Nevertheless twenty-three years after "such a man" died, Mr. Augustine Birrell, when lecturing on him in his own country, had, in a sense, to introduce him to his audience. "My object," he said, "was not to give a précis of Mr. Bagehot's books—that must have been dull, or to assign him his true place in the providential order of the world—that would have been impertinent, but merely to shake the tree, so that you might see for yourselves as the fruit fell from it, what a splendid crop it bears."

Undoubtedly it was in America that the first wide-sounding blast was blown. In 1889—twelve years after Bagehot's death—the first uniform edition of his works was published by *The Travellers' Insurance Company, Hartford, Conn.* To quote from the notice advertising it. "This handsome edition of the works of one of the greatest and most charming writers of the Century is published by The Travellers' Insurance Company as a souvenir of itself; and its nearly nominal price bringing it easily within reach of the poorest student or the most slenderly endowed library—is due to their not desiring to make profit on it as a merchandise." This edition comprised all the works which *had* been reprinted under the editorship of Mr. R. H. Hutton. Mr. Forest Morgan, the editor of this uniform edition, writes: "Once for all, Walter Bagehot's writings have been to me for many years one of the choicest of intellectual luxuries, and a valued store of sound thought and mental stimulation". He asks for fair allowance to be made for "one who has made heavy personal sacrifices of leisure, health and chosen pursuits, to carry through an important work".

When Mr. Hutton expressed his belief that Walter Bagehot's genius was "fitted for a statesman's position," he was evidently conceiving a future fame for him somewhat on different lines from those on which it has been actually attained. His brilliant vitality, his lovable qualities, his originality and humour, might reasonably have led his friends of early days to expect

that his genius would have made its mark in the active sphere of political life where the influence of a strong individuality carries with it so much weight. But for reasons of health, and also for other yet more important considerations—again to quote Sir Robert Giffen—"he early gave up to literature the energies which might have gained him a large fortune in business or a great position in the political world".

The world is the gainer for the sacrifice, if sacrifice it were. Through his writings Walter Bagehot's stimulating genius is now telling on thousands of minds in many countries. *Physics and Politics* alone has been translated into seven different languages; and in 1888 it and *Lombard Street* had reached their eighth editions. During the last eighteen months many thousand copies of one edition alone of the *English Constitution* have been sold. Through his works, fertile thoughts are being suggested and wise opinions formed on subjects which concern the right development of every community at all times, in rising no less than in passing generations. No personal position he might have achieved during his life could have had a more beneficial effect upon his fellow-creatures. The prophecy Mr. Hutton made nearly thirty years before Walter Bagehot's death—namely, that his friend was to exercise an important and permanent influence "over us all as a nation" is certainly being fulfilled through his writings, and this influence which Walter Bagehot's writings have over his posterity, the generation of to-day, is the result of his ideas having sprung into existence in the midst of the work of life, not in the retirement and delicious leisure of the study.

One important service he rendered to the country which ought to be more widely associated with his name than it is. Lord Welby writes:—

"October 5th, 1912. In former days when I was at the head of the Finance Branch of the Treasury, I made the acquaintance (a privilege which I highly value) of Mr. Walter Bagehot. The *machinery* of our financial administration is complicated and Mr. Bagehot is the only outsider who had thoroughly mastered it. Indeed he understood the *machine* almost as completely as we who had to work it. This know-

ledge, added to the soundness of his economical judgment, gave a special value to his opinion and advice. Chancellors of the Exchequer attached great weight to the opinion of Mr. Bagehot, especially Sir Stafford Northcote, who consulted him on several occasions. In 1877 Mr. Bagehot rendered great financial service to the Government by devising a new form of security which enabled the Treasury to borrow quickly and on favourable terms.

"The National Debt is divided into two sections, (1) the Funded Debt; (2) the Unfunded or Floating Debt. The Floating Debt represents money borrowed to meet temporary, sudden, or emergency demands. It is therefore an important part of the financial machine. In the seventies the Treasury was lending largely to local authorities for education, health and other purposes, and it became necessary to obtain money by an increase of the Floating Debt. Ever since the Revolution, the Treasury had raised money under the head of Floating Debt by the sale of a security called 'Exchequer Bills'. This security, however, was antiquated in form and not suited to the requirements of the modern money market. They had in consequence lost popularity and Sir Stafford Northcote had (1876 and 1877) to consider a new method of borrowing. He desired me to state the case to Mr. Bagehot, as at once a practical Banker and a leading economic authority. Mr. Bagehot replied promptly: 'The Treasury has the finest security in the world, but has not known how to use it. The market where you borrow deals in Bills of Exchange and is accustomed to that form of security. The security which you offer should resemble as nearly as possible a Bill of Exchange both in form and method of negotiation. Such a Bill would rank before a Bill of Barings' (then the leading merchants of London). The suggestion was simple, practicable, and intelligible and, although it was not very favourably regarded by the Bank of England, Sir Stafford Northcote adopted it. Since that time (now thirty-five years ago) the Treasury has, for the purpose of Floating Debt, borrowed mainly on the credit of Mr. Bagehot's invention, known in the market as Treasury Bills. His prophecy as to their popularity has been

fulfilled. They are in general demand and always saleable. The price of issue varies of course with the state of the market, but being in favour with lenders, they command good terms. Foreign Governments often invest in them, and they have been imitated in different quarters. At the present moment Japan is meditating the issue of a security on the lines of our Bills. They have not only met ordinary emergency demands, but they have stood the strain of a great war.

"I think that I am the only survivor of those who took part in these consultations of 1876-7, and I have always been anxious that due credit should be given to Mr. Bagehot for the happy advice he then gave. He himself died not long after this event, and I do not think it is mentioned in his works. Indeed he was too modest to talk about his own work. He shares with a famous Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Montagu, the invention of the instruments of Credit by which for more than two centuries provision has been made for the Floating Debt. Charles Montagu in 1695 invented 'Exchequer Bills,' which served the purpose for 180 years, and when they fell out of favour, Bagehot invented in lieu of them 'Treasury Bills,' which still successfully hold the field."

From boyhood Walter Bagehot was a devourer of history, Greek and Roman, no less than of modern literature, and his sagacity taught him early, through these studies, that no great nation made its mark through political strife, but rather through the quality of its moral temperament, its art and its literature. Likewise he understood business (and he calls politics "a piece of business") far too well to confound its value with that of those "immutable ethics"—which concern it not. These were really not cynical views, though at times he might express them in cynical phraseology. They were born of the wise power which Walter Bagehot possessed of affixing to things their proportionate value; of awarding, for instance, in those inimitable passages in the "Essay on the First Edinburgh Reviewers,"[1] the precise species and measure of approval both to a Lord Jeffrey and to a Wordsworth. This power of ap-

[1] See vol. ii. *National Review*, October, 1855.

portioning the true value of things was, in its turn, born of a depth of nature which could reverence profoundly the greatest things, those whose essence partakes of that of another world. In the letter to Sir Edward Fry, already quoted, he writes: "I am an impatient reader of merely pretty poetry (referring to Longfellow's 'Voices of the Night') though not, I trust, without enthusiasm for the great masters of the poetic art, nor untouched by the beautiful expressions of feelings and aspirations, which earnestly long for what is infinite and eternal". On entering University College, London, at the age of sixteen, he met the first serious trial in his life.[1] After facing it with an equal courage and modesty, he writes to his mother: "I hope I have acted right; I have at least the consoling reflection that I tried to do so and that I did not enter upon the performance of a duty to me exceedingly painful in reliance of my own strength, but with the hope of God's all-wise direction. It is my first taste of the troubles of life; henceforth I shall perhaps never be wholly free from them, and although overcoming one, may render the others more easy, I felt the other day with some beautiful lines of Wordsworth:—

> "Yet why repine we, created as we are for joy and rest
> To find them only, in the bosom of eternal things."

This power of measuring aright made him recognise the value of those things which appeal to, and influence, a people's imagination. In the *English Constitution* he lays a stress on this influence. Leslie Stephen writes: "He (Bagehot) admitted that the British Constitution was a whole mass of fictions. It was a vast make-believe, invoking an 'organised hypocrisy,' and for that reason the best of all possible constitutions."

Bagehot writes: "We deify a king in sentiment as we once deified him in doctrine. . . . The illusion has been, and still is, of incalculable benefit to the human race." The "theatrical show of society" impresses the popular imagination; and the "climax of the play is the Queen. Philosophers may

[1] Referred to in Mr. T. Smith Osler's letter written at the time of Walter Bagehot's death.

deride the superstition but the results are inestimable." A Cabinet Government is only possible for "deferential nations": men who can delegate power to "superior persons". Bagehot delighted in his Somerset clown, who regarded the Crimean War "as a personal struggle between Queen Victoria and the Emperor Nicholas, and he did not see how it could be ended till the Queen had caught the Emperor and locked him up". Primitive man, he contended, can only understand loyalty to a person. To reach him you must represent general principles by concrete symbols.

Walter Bagehot held that all this was in essence anything but what Leslie Stephen calls it, "a make-believe". It had a reality behind it—a very truth which has been acknowledged practically, though maybe unconsciously, by all communities since communities existed. Is it not traceable in birds and animals? Is it not the same instinct that makes the peacock who spreads his tail and displays himself as wonderful and beautiful in front of his fellow-peacocks, a very potent person among them? To the unintellectual, unspiritually-minded English man or woman the higher life is conceived appreciably through the visible signs of grandeur and the atmosphere surrounding great people. They appeal also to the peasant as something to be looked up to. Grandeur and luxury fill the place in his imagination which beauty in Nature fills in the soul of the artist, the place a mine of rich ideas fills in the intellectual man, and the place the sense of religion fills in the spiritually minded. "Philosophers may deride the superstition;" the "superior person" may condemn it as beneath contempt; but Walter Bagehot's revealing sense of reality and ingenious insight into human nature—not as it ought to be according to the "superior person," but as it *is*—knew that it existed, and therefore must be counted as one of the elemental forces in social relations.

"We do not mean to insinuate," Bagehot wrote,[1] "we would disclaim that party partiality, that this attraction of the lower stratum of the State to the aristocratic is always or

[1] See the *Economist*, 10th November, 1866, in the first leader, "Ought the Tories to Touch a Reform Bill?"

mostly a base feeling. We believe, on the contrary, that it is an attraction of the most ignorant people towards the best that they know."

He knew that to discount any value in appearance as a force acting on the imagination, is to ignore the value of beauty in Nature, as also in the responsive appreciation of that beauty, which is a rudimentary instinct in undistorted human nature. Walter Bagehot was the last to discount the value of such a force. Watts, who desired to teach the ethical importance of such enjoyment of beauty through the eye, would often lament and condemn the modern fashion in the aristocracy of viewing the display of grandeur in everyday life as bad form, of hiding their magnificence from the multitude. "Why," he would say, "should they not give the poor the indulgence of enjoying the show?" Enjoy it they certainly do, as any grand function, such as a coronation, can prove, and they do not grudge it to the King and Queen, the Lords and Ladies, as long as they have a share in it.

Walter Bagehot believed in the virtue of the existence of a leisured class, which can fulfil the function of being the "theatrical show of society". The hold on the working class, which the aristocracy possesses, means the hold on certain instincts natural to all classes, though the possibility of developing them exists only in a small minority of the community. Leisure—that is to say, the absence of struggle for material necessities—must be secured before this instinct can take a palpable form, and enable our human existence to be visibly perfected. But this leisure must be "an animated leisure," used for the benefit of the world at large. The great "Barbarian" must not isolate himself, but must bestow the benefits of his leisure on his admirers. Walter Bagehot was averse to the doings of all agitators who go in primarily for destroying this atmosphere which surrounds the aristocracy. He recognised a great value in this atmosphere. He inherited something of it in his own blood; he possessed the influence of an atmosphere in his own person. His genius would not alone have given his personality the weight or charm it had. The peculiarly leisurely manner in which he would throw out

his best sallies, his most whimsical hits, had much to do with securing for them their triumph. His personal refinement and choice taste were singularly innate nor was there any hint in his natural dignity of manner either of formality or pose. He took a lively interest in his fellow-creatures no matter to what class they belonged. With Shakesperian geniality, he showed the tolerance of a philosopher towards all his species. His views of Shakespeare's nature can be quoted as those which might justly be ascribed to himself. "In his comprehensive mind it was enough if every man hitched well into his own place in human life. If every one were logical and literary, how could there be scavengers, or watchmen or caulkers,—or coopers? Narrow minds will be 'subdued to what' they 'work in'. The 'dyer's hand' will not more clearly carry off its tint, nor will what is moulded more precisely indicate the confines of the mould. A patient sympathy, a kindly fellow-feeling for the narrow intelligence necessarily induced by narrow circumstances—a narrowness which, in some degrees, seems to be inevitable, and is perhaps more serviceable than most things to the wise conduct of life—this, though quick and half-bred minds may despise it, seems to be a necessary constituent in the composition of manifold genius. 'How shall the world be served?' asked the host in Chaucer. 'We must have cart-horses as well as race-horses, draymen as well as poets. It is no bad thing after all, to be a slow man and to have one idea a year. You don't make a figure, perhaps, in argumentative society, which requires a quicker species of thought, but is that the worse?'"

Walter Bagehot's health was anything but robust; yet his animal vitality was most buoyant. He was daring in taking risk of every kind. To him the fun of hunting lay much in the amount of danger attached to it. He used to terrify his mother by climbing to the top of the Burton Pynsent Monument and running round the coping which was unprotected by any rail or guard. Had his temperament been less well balanced and wisely adjusted, he might have been a gambler. Had he not possessed extraordinary right-headedness in every moral question, he might have been a speculator. Risk was

attractive to him. In early youth his exuberant spirits conquered all physical discomforts. He wrote to his mother, when he was at University College, that he has cured a bad headache by entering into an eager debate in the debating society of the College. In the letter, already quoted, to Sir Edward Fry, he writes: "I fancy from what you say of my disappointment (having to miss a term), etc., that you have melancholy theories about me. If you wish to keep close to the facts of the case you had better dismiss them. I have in general pretty good health, though at the present time I am a good deal troubled by rather severe headaches. But I verily believe I am the happiest person living. I have such a flow of good spirits as no calamities I think could long interrupt, much less exhaust. As for melancholy without apparent cause natural to some minds, I do not know what it means. I am not over-sanguine as to the future in general, but I have a sort of reckless cheerfulness that gets on very well without the aid of hope. Perhaps it may be unfeeling and unsympathising to be so completely happy, but I do not know how to help it."

Even in those early days the best fun he could have, the best tonic he could take, was "to play with his mind"—his own expression. This causeless happiness—an animal happiness of the mind—has assuredly little to do with physical health. Maybe it is the result of those intuitive impulses of the daemon which we call genius? Those happy inspirations which arise without any consciousness of how, or why, or whence they come—the joy of inspiration! What better game could be found than to play with one's own happy creations? What happier life is there than to play such a game? Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff writes: "He (Walter Bagehot) soon learnt the profound truth that work is much more amusing than pleasure". No saying ever pleased Bagehot more than that of his friend Sir George Cornewall Lewis—"the world would not be a bad place if it were not for its pleasures"; pleasures that are invented as such, but so pitiably miss the mark for so many of us!

In these days of brain-forcing, the attainments which Walter

Bagehot's parents felt to be of primary importance in his training, are often but little insisted on. Religious faith, a belief in the reality of the spiritual life, the encouragement of natural family affections, strength and uprightness of character, they viewed as the vital groundwork of his education. The effect of such a training is obvious in his life's story, though with paradoxical humour he would say, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is older he will depart from it". Certain minds apparently feel a reluctance in acknowledging distinct superiority in others of their kind. Though obvious facts prove every day the fallacy of the notion that goodness and cleverness are opposed to one another, we often hear unthoughtful people speak as if they were incompatible. He may be *clever*—the accentuation meaning he is nothing else; or he may be *good*, and that means he has no brains. Genius is subject to similar accusations. If the genius is undeniable, the person possessing it must forsooth be either erratic, or neurotic, or both. Walter Bagehot is a first-rate example to prove that such notions are nonsense. He was as good as he was clever, and had as much sound common-sense as he had uncommon and imaginative genius. There is no temptation to Walter Bagehot's biographer to be partial. He need disguise nothing—need conceal no facts, nor soften any actions. It is all plain sailing and above-board. He was essentially *très bon enfant*, though his nerves were of a fragile, sensitive make. Fragile, sensitive nerves expose the owner to much suffering in no wise conceivable by those of blunt nature. With this species we all know the world to be amply supplied. It inflicts the suffering and has no idea that it has done so. If for no other reason, Bagehot's sense of dignity would have led him to control any irritation he felt. On one occasion only do I remember a good outburst of temper. It was said of an ingenious and delicately-made toy—*elle est bien faite, mais il ne faut pas brutaliser la machine.* Bagehot's nerves were often brutalised; but his physical health alone succumbed under the ordeal.

If this memoir lets in any new light as to what manner of man Walter Bagehot really was, if it is more than a key to his

writings, or an enlargement on Mr. Hutton's admirable and sympathetic memoir, it will be that through a knowledge of his home life the greatest qualities of his nature are disclosed. Sir Robert Giffen truly wrote, "Walter Bagehot was greater than his books". During his life the rare quality of his character was somewhat screened from the world at large. His family trouble was of a kind which it is especially galling to a proud nature to see exposed to the eye of an unsympathising public. He was apt to use cynicism as an armour against the invasion of those into his intimate life with whom he was brought into close contact, but who were not his chosen friends. He had no enemies but few intimates. Walter Bagehot was a proud, though not a vain man. Maybe the tragic nature of his trouble saved him from petty vices. Unlike those whose vanity leads them to idolise the genius with which nature has endowed them, and by such idolatry to sacrifice their most human feelings, Walter Bagehot, however independent and apart his inner life of thought may have been, ever retained a warm, genuine interest in the concerns of his family and early friends, and ever showed a forbearing tolerance towards his species. He was not lacking in ambition, but he never sacrificed home interests for any advancement in public life. When, after my father's death, the Government approached him on the subject of his undertaking the then most important office of Finance Minister in the Supreme Council of India, he did not hesitate before refusing (few even of his own family knew of the transaction); nor would he ever have undertaken any work, however congenial and remunerative, had it interfered with the help he could give his father during his mother's attacks of illness.

When an unusual weight of care has to be borne it is not uncommon to find that there exist special compensations. This was so in Bagehot's case. Speaking of subordinate officials, he wrote, "They have none of the *excitement of origination*". Nor have the vast majority of workers in the world. To only a very few is accorded the delight of such a stimulant to their labours. For the enormous majority, nature, no less than circumstances, ordains a dull plodding on in well-dug-out grooves of habit and thought. Walter Bagehot was

one of the lucky minority. He enjoyed to the full the "excitement of origination". "He was always full of ideas," and these ideas were all his own. His soul—"itself by itself"—struck the flint and brought to birth new sparks of light thrown forth straight from the ego. Mr. Augustine Birrell, in his *Obiter Dicta*, calls him "a man who carried away into the next world more originality of thought than is now to be found in the three estates of the Realm".

Leibnitz wrote, "There are secrets in the art of thinking, as in all other arts". These words greatly impressed Bagehot when as a youth he was studying at University College, London; probably because they first caused him to perceive that he himself was divining these secrets and becoming an adept in this art. He had a rich soil of amassed learning, which underlay the art and constantly fed the excitement of origination. There is a fashion no less than an art in thinking. Ideas guided by fashion are dated as belonging to special periods of culture, whereas original ideas are perennial, belonging to all times. We read the Greeks and think how modern they are; we read Walter Bagehot and feel that he is an ancient no less than a modern. To have at his command rich stores of acquired learning and a never-failing wealth of original ideas; to have divined the secret in the art of thinking, and to have a mind always in action and unhampered by the grooves of fashion—restricted by no prejudices of orthodox opinions, and possessing an ever-ready power of expression in writing and in speech—these blessings compensated much for the weight of care that had to be borne, and which at no time in Bagehot's life he shrank from bearing. He was reserved with regard to the expression of sympathy towards sorrow; it hit too near; it touched a sore. When a certain kind of iron enters the soul, most of us—that is to say if we are English—become dumb, words conveying nothing at all adequate. Still Bagehot's sorrow, I believe, tended to ripen all that was distinguished in his character, and stimulated, rather than suppressed, his intellectual forces. The necessity of having to face the inevitable, without loophole for hope, to acquiesce in the necessity without flinching; to learn through

experience the deeper secrets of life in which mysteries are so closely interwoven with realities, such was the training which ripened very exceptional qualities in a finely wrought nature. Among the fruits of this experience were a dispassionate equilibrium of judgment, a wide sympathy with, and tolerance towards, those who are maimed by any of the various evils which befall humanity; above all, a diffidence in asserting that any conclusive methods, any hard or fast theories, can rectify such evils. He knew only too well that human nature is constructed of so delicate and varied a make of machinery that it is useless to generalise as to its treatment; that the mysterious and the unexpected may always crop up to confront and confound any maker of fixed rules. This knowledge in no wise bewildered Walter Bagehot's sense of right and wrong; but it proved to him how futile it is for private individuals to dogmatise, how impertinent it is for human nature thus limited to mount on any pedestal, or preach from any judgment-seat whatsoever.

On 2nd October, 1877, in a letter to Mr. Hutton, whose memoir of Walter Bagehot had just appeared, Lord Bryce wrote: "If some of his (Walter Bagehot's) earlier writings are, as I fancy, out of print, might it not be well to have them re-issued, and would there not be, out of his letters or ephemeral articles, many that ought to be printed and would have a permanent value? His study sweepings were better than most men's laboured works."

It was this letter which first suggested to Mr. Hutton and my sister the idea of re-publishing the *Biographical and Literary Studies;* it was also this letter which decided me to ask Lord Bryce, on his return to England from America, to write a few recollections of Walter Bagehot for this memoir.

"DEAR MRS. BARRINGTON,

"In compliance with your request, I send you some few recollections of Mr. Walter Bagehot. It is thirty-seven years since he passed away at a comparatively early age, but those who had the good fortune to know him still remember him as perhaps the most original mind of his generation,

Originality is the rarest of all gifts, and might be thought likely to become still more rare as the world moves onward, because, upon the old subjects at any rate, it will become more and more difficult to find anything new to say. With him it was a quality that flashed out in the first few sentences that he spoke or wrote, for he was so fresh, so individual, that he could not help seeing deeper into a question than other people. He always made, as Aristotle says of Plato, a 'new cut' into things. Whenever he touched anything he brought up a crop of new ideas on a subject that had seemed trodden hard, just as a shower of rain in the South African Karroo will bring up grass and flowers.

"Two features in him used to strike me which do not always go with originality. One was his wit, which played quickly and lightly round the least promising materials, a wit that never seemed forced, but scintillated as naturally as sunshine is reflected from crystal. The other was the soundness of his judgment. Original minds often find paradox a good way of showing the hollowness or inadequacy of current doctrines and are apt to carry it to excess. Bagehot used this expedient effectively but sparingly, and only when the paradox contained at least a substantial kernel or truth. In his hands the method never lost its value by degenerating into a habit. Nor did he, like not a few men who have been both ingenious and fertile, cease to discriminate between the relative importance of the ideas he poured forth so profusely. His ingenuity never ran away with him. In the midst of brilliancy he remained sober, wise, penetrating. Thus it is a special charm of his writings that while you are carried on by the sense of novelty and vivacity you are all the time receiving the fruit of exact knowledge and solid thought. Few books have had more influence than his in moulding the minds of students and suggesting new lines or methods of inquiry. *Physics and Politics* was, forty years ago, almost a voyage of discovery for most English readers.

"But take his book on the *English Constitution.* There he found what seemed the most threadbare of topics, upon which there appeared to be nothing more to be said that was worth

saying. But he who had never seen the scheme of British Government except from the outside, had never even sat in the House of Commons, threw so much new light upon it that the book has now become a sort of manual and can be read with profit and pleasure to-day when the Constitution has passed into a very different thing from what it was in the sixties. He pointed out that many of the things which had been admired in the Constitution were not merits at all, and he revealed new merits that his predecessors had not perceived. He broke away from the tradition of those who had surveyed it on its legal and formal side, and bade us look at its actual working. Thus a new turn was given to the discussion of constitutional forms and rules in general, and whoever has since his time dealt with these subjects, has been, consciously or unconsciously, his disciple and follower. Had he lived to apply his method to other and still larger subjects, he might have exercised almost the same kind of influence that Montesquieu exerted in the middle of the eighteenth, and Toqueville in the earlier part of the nineteenth century ; and we feel in him the power of an intellect altogether worthy to be compared even with that of the earlier and greater of those two illustrious men. He was, some of us used to think far back in the seventies, the most interesting man in London to meet, so bright and stimulating was his conversation. It was always conversation, never declamation or lecturing. He could listen as well as talk. He put himself on a level with his interlocutor, and however much you might feel his superiority, he always seemed to be receiving as well as giving, striking out thoughts from others as well as bringing them from his own store. Goldwin Smith was stately and impressive but rather chilling. Bishop Wilberforce was brilliant and witty, but even if he did not exactly talk for display he seemed not to care very much whether what he said was true or not, but only whether it shone. But Bagehot was always cheerful, natural, spontaneous, unaffected. You felt he was hunting for truth, and you enjoyed the sense that he allowed you to be his companion in the chase. Another (younger) contemporary of his whom I recall was one of the best

talkers of his time, quick, gay, and suggestive, but not so sure to strike deep: and there was yet another still more famous, rich in knowledge, eloquent, altogether delightful because he too was so perfectly free from self-consciousness, but who had not the same faculty of always hitting the nail on the head, and Bagehot's ideas were not only illuminative as they came fresh from his lips, but never failed to suggest something to be pondered afterwards. The time that has passed since he left us does not make the loss appear any the less."

CHAPTER II.

LANGPORT AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.

LANGPORT,[1] Walter Bagehot's birthplace, is a small, ancient town on the river Parret in the centre of that part of England which narrows between the Bristol and the English Channels before it again widens out into Devonshire. Langport is thirteen miles from Taunton, thirteen from Bridgwater, thirteen from Glastonbury, thirteen from Yeovil, thirteen from Crewkerne, and five from Somerton, formerly the capital of Somerset. It is quite unique—unlike any other place in England. It reminds one rather of certain small foreign towns. Viewed as a town it is tiny, and the inhabitants do not now number eight hundred. Yet it cannot be called a village; it has a market. Its importance in history and its commercial prosperity are the results of its being the first ford from the mouth of the river Parret.[2] It is like a town stopped short in the making, never having expanded beyond restricted limits. For these limitations there are physical causes. Two hills rise out of the moors half a mile apart. The moors mean in Somerset those wide stretches of meadowland, flat as a lake, from which dead level rise the Mendip, the Quantock, and the Black Down Hills. They include the famous Sedgmoor, the scene of the defeat of Monmouth by Marlborough. One of the two hills

[1] The name Langport stands for *Llan*—Church, and *Porth* or *borth* —harbour.

[2] The river Parret was made the western boundary between the Saxons and the Britons by King Cenwalch in 658 after he had gained a victory at the Pens (Penselwood) and "drove the Britons as far as the Parret" (*Saxon Chronicle*). In 845 is recorded the first inroad of the Danes in the Severn "when the Wessex men made great slaughter and won the battle of the Parret".

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was formerly covered by the ancient town of Langport, a crowded mass of houses, within fortified walls, interlaced with narrow alleys, and crowned by a grand early perpendicular church built on the site of a yet earlier Norman church. The town was entered on the eastern side through an archway under the Hanging Chapel, built in the latter part of the thirteenth century as the Merchants' Guild Chapel. These and the church still exist as they were in olden times. The opposite hill, Herd's Hill, is crowned by groups of huge elm trees, whose rounded masses of foliage rise with stately effect against the western sky.

As a child in arms, little Walter Bagehot was taken up from the Bank House in the town, where his parents lived during the life of his grandfather, to lay the foundation-stone of the existing house on the summit of the hill.[1] Between the two hills runs the present street of Langport which dates from some centuries back. One end is called Bow Street, Bow being the Saxon word for bridge, the other Cheapside. It owes its existence to the Romans who found it necessary to make a causeway over the moors at this point between the two hills when constructing a highway from the West Country to London. They built nine bridges to carry the road and to lift it over the swamps. This viaduct, the work of Roman engineers, was solidly constructed, and houses were gradually erected here and there on each side of it. Eventually these houses formed a street, continuing half way up the hill towards the church. It included the Bank House where Walter Bagehot

[1] A chronicler of the last century writes: "The modern House stands on the summit of Herd's Hill whence Richard Baxter on his first campaign as a Chaplain to the Cromwellian Army, must have viewed with Fairfax the flight of the Royalist Army under Lord Goring after the battle of Langport. But from that spot a history of England might be illustrated. There, beneath is Athelney, where Alfred burnt the immortal cakes which he was left to bake. There is Aller whither he took Guthrun, the Danish King, to Christian baptism; Montacute, the home of the Knightly family with its Abbey to which the Rood of Grace was brought from Watham; Sedgmoor with its memories of Monmouth's rebellion and its terrible sequel; and just the top of Burton Pillar with its story of eighty years of the Chatham reign."

was born. This is a large, six-windowed, solidly built residence with spacious rooms and wide staircases next door to the Bank. The ancient town on the hill surrounding the church has disappeared with the exception of a trace here and there of a narrow alley or a relic of the old fortification walls embedded in some new structure. Covering the space occupied by the ancient buildings now stands Hill House, the residence first of the ancestors of the Bagehots, and subsequently of the Stuckey family, from about 1750 till ten years ago, together with various smaller residences and gardens.

The unsafe moor reaches close up to the backs of the houses, and prevents any expansion of the town behind the street of Langport. Till within the last few years the floods would mount so high that the street itself was invaded, the water rising to the first floor of the houses and turning the street into a Venice-like canal. Means have been found to stop this mischievous invasion of the water into Langport itself, but no steps have been taken to stop the flooding of the moors. The mind of the West countryman is an economical mind. It distinctly has its limitations, and is not hastily progressive. Where economy could be effected, Walter Bagehot pointed out how the Langportians could, on the contrary, be retrogressive. Mr. Hutton writes: "In early days (Langport) returned two Members to Parliament until the burgesses petitioned Edward I. to relieve them of the expense of paying their Members, a quaint piece of economy of which Bagehot frequently made humorous boast". Long ago means might have been found of draining the moors and preventing their being flooded, had not the native mind been bent another way. These floods are potent fertilisers of the soil, and the farmer, being anxious to fertilise his land without expense, does not desire that the floods should be restrained. To his mind any advantage which might accrue to the neighbourhood from developing industries through extending the town of Langport was problematical and far off; whereas the expenditure which would be necessary in order to manure his land would be a matter of immediate and disagreeable importance to him. These moors give their name to the county, sea-moor-settlers-

Somersetee. There is a something curiously soothing and romantic in the feeling which these widespreading lonely lands inspire. Free, far-reaching, and almost uninhabited, like the sea they are absolutely untormented by any innovation of modernity. Rows of pollarded willow trees are planted along the edge of the rough roadways that now and then cross the moors, and by the side of the rhines, ditches which gleam in water tracks among the meadows. Like the olive of the South, their pointed-leaved foliage turns from grey-green to silver as they are swept by "the everlasting wash of air" which rushes over the flat plains from the far-away sea. Growing as luxuriantly as they like, all kinds of lovely things flourish and bloom undisturbed in the water or on the edge of these rhines—bullrushes, the flowering rush of the delicate pink asphodel-like flower, yellow irises, forget-me-nots, willow weed, loose-strife, and meadow sweet, and countless other rare delights, many of them treasures to botanists. Here and there, at long intervals, a farmstead has found a little rise in the moor whereon to perch itself. There is hardly a view over these stretched-out lands which does not include at least one or two of the beautiful square church towers for which Somerset is famous, rising massively out of clumps of elm trees, or from low-thatched roofs of village cottages nestled around them. They strike the welcome note of an art allied in its quality to all this unspoilt nature. But such incidents are but as a ship on the wide waters of the sea ; a spot which only marks more distinctly the contrast between the amount of work done by nature in the scene, and that constructed by human hands.

There are three points from which the characteristic features of this scenery can be most clearly viewed. Two of these are specially associated with Walter Bagehot, and the third, perhaps more particularly in my mind, with his friend, Richard Hutton. Standing by the grave of Walter Bagehot, but a few yards distant from the south side of Langport Church, and looking over the low wall which separates the grave from the steep southern side of the hill, you see the river Parret gliding away towards Muchleney Abbey, the child of the famous Glastonbury Abbey, nestled with its church tower among

trees and thatched cottages. Past Muchleney, away stretch the moors with their rows of pollarded willows, with here and there a cluster of elm trees, moor and trees softening from green into a purple middle distance; then they melt into a blue which gets misty and far away before the rising ground is reached, topped by three hills marking the domain of Montacute, the beautiful home of the Phelips family. One of these three hills is verily a Somerset Pentelicus. From its side is quarried the famous Ham-Hill stone which for centuries has made beautiful many churches, mansions, and cottages all over this part of the world. Quaintly enough it is now to be found also in Piccadilly! Away past Montacute again the flat land stretches, now a faint silvery mist with here and there a blotch of azure to show it is earth not sky, away till the blue line of the Dorset hills determines the horizon.

On leaving the churchyard and turning to the right, passing Hill House and through the archway surmounted by the thirteenth-century Hanging Chapel, one sees rising straight from the ground one of the great glories of this country-side—the almost unrivalled tower of Huish Episcopi Church, a treasured feature from many points in the grounds of Herd's Hill. Like Langport Church, it stands on the site of an older Norman edifice. The chief entrance is still through a fine Norman doorway. When Walter Bagehot was young one vicar served the two churches, and the afternoon Sunday services, to which he was taken as a boy by his mother, were held alternately at Langport and at Huish Episcopi. Following a road which rises from Huish on to high ground to the north you look down on Low Ham, its ancient church and the ruined walls of the mansion of romantic traditions, across valleys to the Tor at Glastonbury and to ranges of the Mendip above Wells. After passing again another very fine church, that of High Ham, most notable for the exquisite carving of its old oak screen, the road leads along a ridge to a point of view over the moors called Turn Hill. This is the widest and most extended view which can be got of the moors. It includes the whole of Sedgmoor and, among many other churches, that of Chedzoy, where part of the King's Army

slept before the day of the battle of Sedgmoor. Still to be seen on the porch are the slashes inflicted on the stone where the soldiers whetted their swords before going forth to war.

That battle seemed very remote and out of the scene on the afternoon when Walter's friend, Richard Hutton, sat with us on the fine close turf of Turn Hill on a day in August, six months after Walter's death, and gazed over vast stretches of level moor, sunlit air and space all steeped in a dreamland charm. At one point or another, over the Quantock range, some twenty miles away, a faint hint of Welsh mountains could be traced. The Quantocks themselves were but toned sunshine, such a flood of light was over it all! It twinkled here and there into bright distinctness as a sunray caught the glass in a building, glistened on the water in a rhine, or struck a cloud of steam bounding upwards from an express train far away. Great Western expresses rush to and fro all day from Paddington to Plymouth and from Plymouth to Paddington past Bridgwater and Taunton along that far away distance. Viewed from our headland, their volumes of rolling steam were but as clouds floating across the distant landscape; they did not disturb the dream. In the dazzling air high above us skylarks were pouring their

> full heart
> In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

From low down—very far down on the moors—the sound of the lowing of kine was wafted up with a faint echo of farm life—a life in its reality as remote from the feeling inspired by the place that afternoon, as are hints of the like mundane occupations when you come upon them in a verse of Greek poetry. We sat long, drinking in the loveliness of this strange country—Walter Bagehot's country. These Somerset moors have a strong character of their own. They give you Nature under an aspect very gentle, but very vast. A whiff from the sea, mingling with the delicious velvety softness of West Country air, stimulates the quality of the breezes: it exhilarates while it soothes.

The third notable view of these moors, three miles to the

west of Langport, is perhaps the most beautiful of its kind in Somerset. Here they are seen from a headland where stands a landmark prominent and seen from all the country round, the monument erected by Lord Chatham in memory of Sir William Pynsent about the year 1759, after the property was left by Sir William to the statesman in recognition of his public services. On its base Lord Chatham inscribed: "Sacred to the memory of Sir William Pynsent

Hoc Saltem fungar inani—munere," [1]

Virgil's lines addressed by Æneas to the Shade of Marcellus. It was on the top of this column, 150 feet high, that Walter Bagehot performed, as a young man, the rash feats which so terrified his mother. Till quite lately, from the hill where rises this column, half a mile away, a lonely remnant of the great mansion pictured in Collinson's *Somerset* could be seen, embedded among great cedar trees; purple-shaded walls of a deserted dwelling built by Lord Chatham as a wing to the older lordly structure. This wing was the only portion of the mansion spared by the creditors when Lady Chatham died and the rest of the building was pulled down *for its material!* We of this generation owe the magnificence of the timber in the Burton Pynsent Woods to "the prophetic eye of taste" (Chatham's words about his planting mania), likewise to the extravagant tendencies which led, alas! to the demolition of the great mansion. Still we ought to feel grateful. If he recklessly threw his bread upon the waters, it is we, after many days, in this twentieth century who are still reaping the benefit. In Lord Rosebery's *Life of Lord Chatham* is the following account of why and how the hill was planted:—

"Pitt, debarred from the sports of the field, had always taken a lively interest in the laying out of land, in planting, in landscape gardening. He had, to use his own felicitous expression, 'the prophetic eye of taste'. He utilised it freely and indeed extravagantly at his own homes, for in the pursuit of this hobby he disdained all limitations. Once, when Secretary of State, he was staying with a friend near London whose grounds he had undertaken to adorn, and in the evening was

[1] Lord Chatham's adaptation of Virgil's lines:—
"His saltem accumulen donis, et fungar inani Munere."

summoned suddenly to London. He at once collected all the servants with lanterns, and sallied forth to plant stakes in the different places that he wished to mark for plantations. In later life he ran to still greater extremes. At Burton Pynsent a bleak hill bounded his view and offended his eye. He ordered it to be instantly planted with cedars and cypresses. 'Bless me, my Lord,' said the gardener, 'all the nurseries in the County would not furnish the hundredth part required.' 'No matter; send for them from London.' And from London they were sent down by land carriage at a vast expense."

Besides this planting, Lord Chatham erected small temples in the Renaissance style of architecture along a wide grass terrace which he made on the hill-side, leading from the house to the Monument. A lordly revelling went on under his reign, and the place is still haunted by a feeling of the grandeur and reckless magnificence of the past. This extravagance brought the property eventually into the possession of Walter Bagehot's cousin, the daughter of the last Vincent Stuckey. It was recently sold again, and the deserted wing erected by Lord Chatham was added to and restored by the present owner, Mrs. Crossley, who purchased the property. There exists an important fact in Walter Bagehot's family history which links him to the Chatham reign at Burton Pynsent. His uncle, a notable personage, Vincent Stuckey of Hill House, started his singularly successful career in life through the patronage of Lady Chatham, who, after Lord Chatham's death, much favoured the Stuckey family. As a youth Vincent Stuckey asked her for an introduction to her son, the great Pitt. She willingly gave it, and this introduction obtained for him a clerkship in the Treasury and the post of Private Secretary to Pitt. This official life he deserted in order to found the famous Stuckey Bank.

On a midsummer evening it is good to linger into the twilight hours seated on the fine turf, embroidered with many-coloured tiny blossoms, on the foremost point below the Monument jutting out over the moors, and watch, as it were from the prow of a ship, all the wonders of light and colour that creep over the moors as the sun sinks behind the faint line of

Devonshire hills in the west. This particular point is sentinelled by a group of seven wind-blown Scotch firs, clinging on with naked, claw-like roots to the precipitous fall of the hill-side. Sweeping backwards, and rising from the moors in undulating folds, slopes covered by masses of the magnificent timber of Lord Chatham's planting, roll away towards the west, past the Vale of Taunton, into Devonshire. On one distinct promontory far away rises the Wellington Monument above the town of Wellington. These lesser spurs of the Brendons are surmounted on the horizon by the Blackdown and Dartmoor heights—the country of Lorna Doone; to the right, in the distance, these are joined to the heights of Exmoor and the Quantocks, the whole forming one vast amphitheatre of hills sweeping down into the widely spread basin of the moors. As we watch the sun sinking, a dazzling mist, a sort of sky repeated on the earth, divides the far distant moor from the rise of the Devonshire hills. With a delicate gradation the glow of fiery gold intensifies as it creeps along, touching with a yet more vivid hue each incident of the landscape as it travels forward, till the Burton Monument is reached. Then the full glory of colour and light bursts forth over the foreground, turning to scarlet the stems of the Scotch firs close by, and to brilliant orange the gravelly hill-side from which they spring. Fierce, fiery light burns into everything for a space, then subsiding into a carmine glow, loses itself in a sheen of dove-breast silver and pink, fading into silent shade as the curtain of night begins to fall. As a thought of Pentelicus is suggested by the quarried hill of Montacute, so the Roman Campagna, as seen from the Albano hills, is recalled here in the heart of rural Somerset from the heights of Burton Pynsent. There is something that associates the dignity of a classic world with these West Country scenes, the dignity arising, maybe, from a feeling that all this vast unspoilt nature is the ruling spirit presiding nobly over mundane matters. The great spaces of uninterrupted air and sky make these ordinary sunset effects uncommon and impressive. Certain it is that from childhood it was on no ordinary views of English landscape that Walter Bagehot's eye was fed. A pathos

doubtless, no less than a romantic delight, is attached to these typical scenes of his native country. To the few inhabitants who dwell on the moors, these wide expanses of sky and field must feel at times solitary and lonely. A corresponding pathos existed also in his life. Though the joys of genius were very generously allotted to him, the anxious family trouble caused by his mother's illness, about which a certain reserve had to be maintained, proved an ever-present cloud hanging over his life.

But besides the Roman Campagna-like tracts of land, where "Nature has its way" freely and unrestrainedly, corresponding to the happy and wholesome spirit in Walter Bagehot's nature, the surroundings of Langport abound in delightful rural and domestic spots, the Chaucer-like element in English scenery. Out-of-the-way villages, such as Muchelney, Aller, Pitney, Othery, Middlezoy, Weston Zoyland, Long Sutton, all these and many others belong to the rural picturesque England of olden times, cosy villages nestled round beautiful churches, for the most part grand, imposing structures. Farmsteads and cottages, lovable in their old-world fashion, are met with at every turn of the road and lanes. Modest manor houses of yore, still retaining much architectural charm, are now used as farm-houses, being perhaps the more attractive, to the artist at least, owing to the transformation. The beautiful remnant of the once great Abbey of Muchelney is now inhabited by a farm labourer. The damp in the atmosphere of these parts gives a softened intensity to the colouring of everything. This is a distinct beautifier. The homeliest dwelling, the most insignificant feature in the landscape, is made notable to those who love colour when coming under its spell. Twigs of trees in winter, elsewhere grey or black, put on in these parts a juicy pink and a raisin purple. The arbutus, decorated at Christmas-tide alike with fruit and flower, and the leaves of the bay and myrtle trees that grow happily in the West Country, recall the quality of jewelled enamel, so brilliant is the green of their foliage when seen against the deep blue of the atmosphere. In stormy weather, when the sun burns hot between the showers, the hills will seem to draw

quite close and appear like walls of pure lapis lazuli, intensely blue against golden inlets that break a light through the storm-clouds in the sky. The colouring of flowers, the apples in the orchards, all growth is beautified by this soft damp which saturates the air. It tones the amber Ham-Hill stone with broideries of gorgeous orange moss and full-tinted lichen; it gives to the thatch of cottage roofs a peculiarly pleasant raw-umber and purple hue. In the *wunderschonen Monat Mai*, when in shaded orchards gay apple blossoms sprinkle the boughs with a lively sparkle of pink and white; when bushes of lilac, that love this damp, and grow abundantly in it, toss their festive plumes up against the purple-brown of a thatched roof; when the juicy amber of young leaves on walnut trees contrasts with the full azure blue of moorland and hill, and every cottage garden is bedecked with bright spring flowers, all the world in this sweet country in the west seems to be revelling in a sport of colour, and to have become the stage for an ideal May Day Festival.

Such is the land in which Walter Bagehot was born and bred, and died—the land he pined for when a boy student at the Bristol College, and still pined for when a youth at University College in London; the country he rode about, hunted over, and loved; the world of sweet natural beauty that early tuned his eager imagination to the inspirations of Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats.

This beauty in nature was the world outside Langport; but inside the minute old borough was a world which tuned his mind to many other matters, matters that were treated with vigour and enterprise in this quaint little town, and which fed his mind with food of quite another sort. Those who knew Walter Bagehot in his home, among his own surroundings, cannot fail to find at every turn in his early writings allusions reminding them of the influence these surroundings had on his nature. He begins his essay on Cowper: "We are the English of the present day. We have cows and calves, corn and cotton; we hate the Russians; we know where the Crimea is; we believe in Manchester the great. A large expanse is around us; a fertile land of corn and

orchards, and pleasant hedgerows, and rising trees, and noble prospects, and large black woods, and old church towers. The din of great cities comes mellowed from afar. The green fields, the half-hidden hamlets, the gentle leaves, soothe us with 'a sweet inland murmur'. We have before us a vast seat of interest, and toil, and beauty, and power, and this our own. Here is our home. The use of foreign literature is like the use of foreign travel. It imprints in early and susceptible years a deep impression of great, and strange, and noble objects; but we cannot live with these. They do not resemble our familiar life; they do not bind themselves to our intimate affection; they are picturesque and striking, like strangers and wayfarers, but they are not of our home, or homely; they cannot speak to our 'business and bosoms'; they cannot touch the hearth of the soul."[1]

[1] All who are interested in Langport, Walter Bagehot's birthplace, owe a debt of gratitude to the present Vicar, David Melville Ross, for writing a book entitled *Langport and its Church: the story of the Ancient Borough, with references to neighbouring Parishes.* "To the people of Langport I dedicate this Labour of Love" is the inscription on the fly-leaf. The learning and research displayed in the work are only equalled by the love and devotion which the author evinces for his subject. The history of Walter Bagehot's family as connected with Langport is related in the tenth part of the book. The first number opens with a list of portreeves, otherwise mayors, who were elected afresh every year as long as the Corporation existed, namely, from 1456 to 1885. Sad to say in 1886 this Corporation was abolished, for no other apparent reason than that other country town Corporations had spent their substance in too much eating and drinking. The late Mr. Vincent Stuckey headed a deputation which appealed to Sir Charles Dilke to commute this sentence of death, but to no avail. One of the duties of the portreeves was to examine every year the nine bridges which support the present town, to see if any repairs were necessary. There is no record of any of these bridges having fallen in till the year 1911, when the first bridge to the west, "Big-Bow," collapsed. Other unfortunate events have taken place in the town which would probably not have occurred had the old constitution of the little borough still existed.

The families of Michell, Stuckey, and Bagehot were closely allied through several inter-marriages—Michells held the post of portreeve twenty-two times from 1658 to 1831, Stuckeys twenty-six times from 1708 to 1884, Bagehots fifteen times from 1763 to 1882. The following is the account given by Mr. Ross of the part which the Stuckey and Bagehot families took

Mr. Robert Dickinson, grandson of the then, and cousin of the present owner of the large property of Kingweston, eight

in promoting the prosperity of Langport: "'The town is described in 1673 as on the river Parret, which is navigable for barges from Bristol from whence it has some trade. It is a well-frequented town, and hath a good market on Saturdays for corn and provisions' (Blome's *Britannia*). We must now point out how largely this trade was increased through the ability and enterprise of the two families Stuckey and Bagehot. These two families dominated Langport for 150 years from the middle of the eighteenth century, first through their river and sea trade, and then through the Bank which the Stuckeys founded. In 1742 the population of England was only six millions, and the superiority of the southern counties was passing to the northern through the rise of manufactures in the north. But the Stuckeys and Bagehots kept prosperity in Langport, and caused a large increase of the population through their carrying trade.

"The Bagehot family are traced back to the days of the Norman William, where the same spelling of the name occurs in the Battle Abbey Roll. From the beginning of the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century they lived at Presbury, near Cheltenham. In the Civil War Captain Thomas Bagehot fought at the first battle of Newbury (1643), and at the Restoration he applied for re-admission to the post of Groom of the King's Chamber in Ordinary, which he had held under Charles I., reciting his services at Newbury (State Papers, Domestic, Vol. XXII.). Another member of the family, joining the Parliamentary side, withdrew to Abergavenny, where Thomas Bagehot was born in 1717. He was trained for the Ministry at a Nonconformist College. He came to Langport before 1747, and appears to have built a chapel in North Street. But after his migration to Hill House he became a churchman, and in the Churchwardens' Accounts, 1755, we find ground enough sold in the church to T. Bagehot for a pew about 6½ ft. broad for 3s. on the lives of himself and his wife and children, Anne, Priscilla, Thomas, and Robert. The elder Vincent Stuckey (Walter Bagehot's uncle) kept a pack of hounds in Whatley, and dwelt in patriarchal style among his people—hospitable, free-handed, and popular. He might be seen at times seated under the great elm on the Hill fronting the west door of the church and chatting with his neighbours. He used to tell how in his Treasury days he had shot snipe in the muddy fields between St. James' Park and Sloane Street (his home), now called Belgravia. However quiet the little town might be sometimes, its carters and wharf and barge population were early astir; and each day the women and children crowded expectant to their doors and to the entrances of the courts to see the mail coaches dash in and draw up at the Langport Arms, or to watch the banker Stuckey on his return from London driving in with his carriage and postillions. Most people found it too expensive to travel

miles from Langport, and Colonel Batten, a nephew of one of Walter Bagehot's intimate friends, have been good enough to look up the history of Stuckey's Bank and to send the following account of it for insertion in this life of Walter Bagehot. Interesting in itself, it is intimately connected with his family and his own career, and therefore finds a place in the record of his life.

"The bank with which Walter Bagehot and his father were so long connected was variously known as Stuckey's Bank, the Somersetshire Bank, and the Bristol and Somersetshire Bank.

"The premises at Langport, where the bank was founded and in which Walter Bagehot was born, were bought by the Stuckeys in 1741. The business was first established about the year 1772. This is proved by the evidence of Vincent Stuckey in June, 1832, before Lord Althorp, the Chairman of the Committee on the Charter of the Bank of England. Mr. Stuckey stated that his bank had twelve partners with fourteen branch banks and that they had been bankers upwards of sixty years.

"Besides the deeds of the Banking House, there are other deeds in Langport indicating that in 1801 Samuel Stuckey and his brother George Stuckey were bankers in that town.

"There are various deeds of partnerships extant relating to the businesses at Langport, Bridgwater, and Bristol, the partners being generally the Stuckeys and their relatives.

"The name of Thomas Watson Bagehot (father of Walter Bagehot) occurs in a partnership deed dated 30th March, 1825. These family banks were eventually merged into Stuckey's Banking Company in 1826. The original Deed of Settlement of Stuckey's Banking Company is dated 1st September, 1831, and is signed among others by Vincent Stuckey and Thomas Watson Bagehot.

"The date of this deed shows that Stuckey's was one of the earliest joint-stock banks in the country; and it may be noted

at that time. A journey to London for most of them would be the event of a lifetime. They were content to go short distances by the mail, or to travel by barge to Bridgwater."

Cheque on Stuckey's Bank dated June, 1811, with Picture of their Original Premises in Bristol

that in 1836 Vincent Stuckey was called as a witness before the Joint-Stock Bank Committee.

"Besides the family banks the following is a list of the various banks which Stuckey's acquired at different dates:—

NAME.	DATE OF AMALGAMATION.
Walters, Waldron, Timbrell & Barton, Frome	—
Phelps & Co., Crewkerne	—
Batten, John, Edmund & H. B., Yeovil, Yeovil Old Bank	—
Woodland & Co., Bridgwater	—
Whitmash & White, Yeovil	—
Ricketts, Thorne, Wait & Courtenay, The Castle Bank, Bristol	1826
Sparks & Co., Crewkerne	1826
Hoskins & Co., Crewkerne	—
Reeves & Porch, Wells, Glastonbury, and Shepton Mallet	1835
Kinglake & Co., Taunton	1838
Tufnell, Falkner & Falkner, Bath Bladad Bank	1841
Bladud & Co., Taunton	1873
Dunsford & Co., Tiverton (established 1788), Tiverton Old Bank	1883

"The growth of the business may be traced in the following circular which was issued in 1836:—

"'Several applications having been made for shares, the Directors think proper to make the following statement:—

"'The company was formed from an old bank established more than sixty years since which uniformly maintained its credit and respectability. As soon as the Act 7 Geo. 4, Cap. 46, allowed more than six partners to form a bank, four other banks were united with the original one, and the company may be stated to have been established by about ten or twelve individuals. The company so commenced has gone on increasing in prosperity and wealth. Its establishments are confined to Bristol and the county of Somerset, for which it has ample resources, having always upwards of half a million sterling at its immediate command.

"'At present the number of proprietors exceed forty, and provision is made by the deed of settlement for the admission of new proprietors of property and respectability, so as always to have a sufficient proprietary to maintain the two great principles of banking—viz. perpetuity and safety.

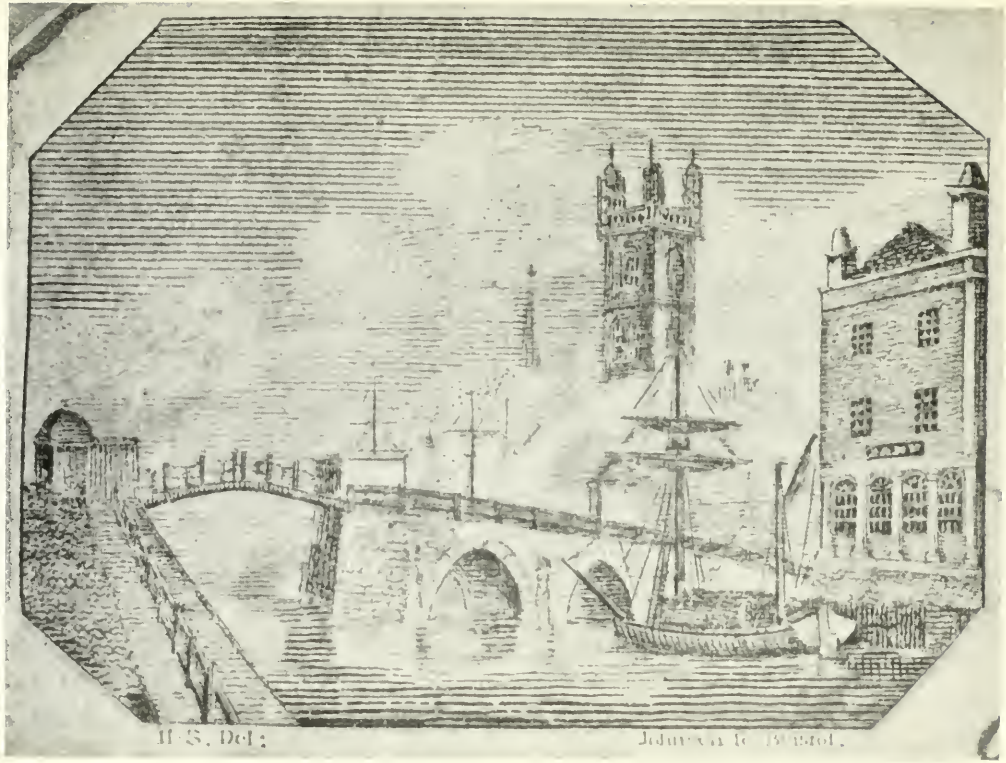
"'The Directors are elected by the shareholders. New shareholders are required to pay £50 for each share, and on the £50 so paid they will probably get from 7 to 10 per cent, and be entitled to all the privileges of the original proprietors or those who formed the company. As it is not the practice to divide the whole profits of the business, they will also partake of the emoluments of the reserve fund should a bonus be declared, of which there have been two since the establishment of the company.

"'It is not expected that new shareholders will be called on for any payment beyond the sum originally advanced, but in this respect, as in all others, they will stand precisely in the same situation as the original proprietors, and the accounts of the company will be furnished half-yearly for their inspection, so that they may from time to time be enabled to judge of the nature and extent of their responsibility and of the sufficiency of the assets of the company, and that they may rest quite satisfied that their general property can never be called upon for any engagements of the company.

"'HEAD OFFICE,
"'LANGPORT, 30*th April*, 1835.'

"Stuckey's enjoyed for many years the privilege of issuing notes—at one time one pound notes were issued and afterwards notes of five pounds and ten pounds. This privilege lapsed on the amalgamation with Parr's Bank in 1909. This issue was the largest in England, after the Bank of England. The local popularity of the notes was great, and is alluded to by Mr. George Sampson in his introduction to *Literary Studies* by Walter Bagehot as 'the famous Stuckey's Bank,' whose notes were so familiar in the West of England at that time, that Somerset men have been known to reject the foreign and suspicious paper of Threadneedle Street and demand payment in 'Stuckey's'.

"At the time of the amalgamation there were seventy branches and agencies, and the Directors were J. R. P. Goodden, H. J. Badcock, H. Cary Batten, R. P. Batten, — Pooll, H. Phelips Batten, R. E. Dickinson, J. M. Heathcoat, — Amory,



50 Broad Quay, the Premises in which Stuckey's Bank carried on their Business till 1826, when they moved into the Dutch House

H. W. P. Hoskyns, C. Lethbridge, C. M. F. Luttrell, and E. C. Nicholetts.

"At Langport the general management of the bank was conducted by Thomas Watson Bagehot, Walter Bagehot, Vincent Stuckey, and Herbert Butler Batten. The latter also worked at Bristol with Walter Bagehot, and joined Stuckey's on the amalgamation with Batten's Old Bank at Yeovil. The Head Office of Stuckey's Bank remained at Langport till 1908 when it was moved to Taunton.

"Before the introduction of the railways, Langport was in communication with the business of the county by the navigable river Parret and by canals, and it was situated on the main coach-road to London.

"In 1892 the bank became a Limited Company.

"In 1909 the bank was amalgamated with Parr's Bank, Ltd."

The following account of Stuckey's Bank at Bristol is from Mr. Charles Cave's well-known work on Bristol Bankers:—

"The opening of this bank in Bristol is described thus in the diary of a Bristol citizen in 1806:—

"'September 1st. A new Bank opened on the Quay called the Bristol and Somersetshire Bank.'

"The head-quarters of the bank appear to have been Langport from the time the bank started; and, as is generally known, that place is the head-quarters of the bank at the present day.

"*Vincent Stuckey* was founder of the bank, which consisted at the time of the opening of the Bristol Branch of six partners, George Stuckey, Vincent Stuckey, James Lean, John Hart, John Maningford, and Samuel Stuckey; and, as far as I have been able to ascertain, James Lean and John Maningford were the two who managed the Bristol business.

"The premises of the bank were at 50 Broad Quay, and the London Agents were Rogers, Olding, and Rogers, of 3 Freeman's Court, Cornhill.

"From the face of a bank-note in my possession, dated 1812, it appears that the bank had a branch at Bridgwater as well as at Langport and Bristol.

"A change of partnership took place this year; George Stuckey's name disappeared and a new deed of partnership was drawn up, dated 1st July; the partners being Vincent Stuckey, James Lean, John Hart, and John Maningford. No change, however, was made in the management of the Bristol business, James Lean and John Maningford remaining on.

"The same year saw a further change in the London Agents —as we learn from one of the early Bristol Directories that the bank drew on Sir William Curtis, Bart. & Co., of Lombard Street.

"From the face of a bank-note dated this year it appears that the bank had by this time increased its business, as besides Langport, Bristol, and Bridgwater, it had now established branches at Taunton and Wells.

"The year 1826 was an eventful year in the history of this bank, as two events of importance occurred. In the first place the bank was now formed into a Joint-Stock Company; and in the second place the Bristol Branch changed its premises from 50 Broad Quay to the corner of High Street and Wine Street, taking over the house and business of the Castle Bank, Messrs. Ricketts & Co., who relinquished business the same year.

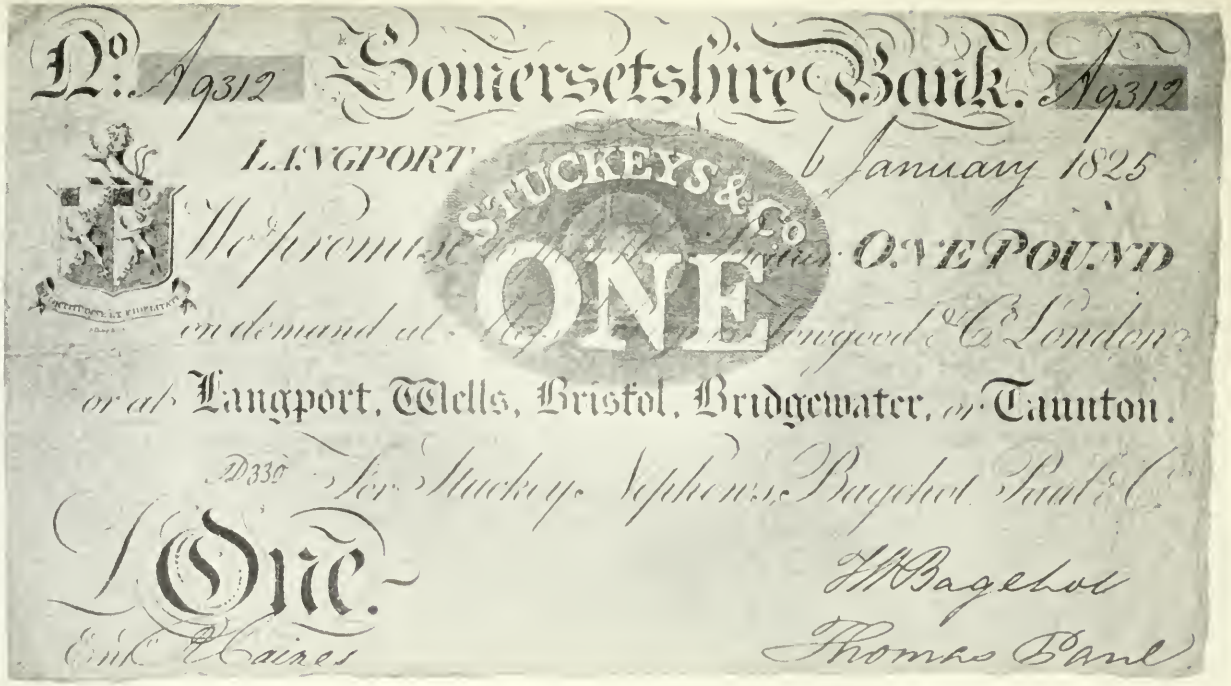
"In 1851 Stuckey's contemplated moving into more extensive premises.

"'April. The Messrs. Stuckey's Banking Co. have purchased of Mr. Harrill, auctioneer, the extensive premises known as the City Auction Mart, in Corn Street, for the purpose of erecting an extensive and handsome banking establishment.'

"These premises were originally the Banking House of Messrs. Ames, Cave & Co., and were sold to Mr. Harrill in 1826, when the amalgamation between the Bank of Ames, Cave & Co. and the Old Bank took place.

"It was not till three years afterwards that the new house of Stuckey's Banking Co. was ready, as we learn that on 5th June, 1854, 'the new Bank of the Messrs. Stuckey & Co., in Corn Street, opened for business'.

"The same year John Maningford, who had been a manager



Stuckey's One Pound Bank Note Signed by Walter Bagehot's Father in 1825

of the Bristol business since 1806, died; and his death was followed three years later by that of Charles Paul, the management being now left in the hands of P. F. Aiken and W. G. Coles.

"This led to the admission of a new manager the following year, Walter Bagehot, who continued as such until 1861.

"High Sheriffs of Bristol connected with Stuckey's Bank in late years were:—

"James Lean, 1833.

"William Gale Coles, 1867.

"Alfred Deedes, 1892.

"Herbert Cary Batten, 1904 and 1908.

"The curious old wooden house at the corner of High Street and Wine Street which Stuckey & Co. acquired in 1826 is said to have been brought to Bristol from Amsterdam. It was at one time occupied by John Vaughan the goldsmith, who was one of the earliest Bristol Bankers.

"Another connection with the Bristol Corporation is the legacy of fifty thousand pounds left to it by Vincent Stuckey Lean, a cousin of Vincent Stuckey's, for the Library. He also left a similar amount to the British Museum.

"Walter Bagehot was associated with the business at various branches besides Langport. The close attention he paid to practical banking may be observed in the various arrangements made as to his work. The following instances of such arrangements may be of interest:—

"*In October*, 1855—*Walter Bagehot* was appointed Secretary to the Committees of Management at Langport and at Bristol.

"*In December*, 1857—with regard to the Bristol Management it was arranged that Walter Bagehot should attend at the Bristol Bank three or four days a week and share in its management and responsibilities and spend the rest of his time at Langport and elsewhere in discharge of his other duties.

"*In June*, 1858—*Walter Bagehot* was authorised to sign cash-notes and other such documents as one of the Managers of the Bristol department.

"*In December*, 1859—a letter was read from Mr. Walter Bagehot stating that in Mr. Wilson's absence in India he

would be required to give some attention to the management of the *Economist* newspaper, and that his duties connected with it would take him to London perhaps once a fortnight for two or three days which might interfere with the arrangement made with the bank two years ago. His attendance in Bristol would be the same, but he should not be able to be at Langport so often as he had been. His attention when in London would be given to any business of the Bank requiring it.

"1861—Bagehot resigned the local managership of the Bristol Bank in consequence of this change of residence. He continued to be Secretary to the Committee and Directors. It was settled that his attention should be directed to the superintendence of the Bristol Bank."

"ANOTHER BANK AMALGAMATION." (*The Economist*, 30th October, 1909.)

"The amalgamation of Stuckey's Banking Company with Parr's Bank closes the separate existence of one of the oldest banking institutions in England. Stuckey's Bank was founded at Langport, Somerset, early in the eighteenth century. A purely local bank for Gloucester and Somerset—its shareholders being all freeholders in one county or the other—it had from the first a great reputation. Among its customers were many famous men, who came into close and sometimes delicate relations with the managers. The elder Pitt, who inherited a magnificent palace at Burton Pynsent, near Langport, from Sir William Pynsent, who was no relation and a stranger to him, was at least once driven, by his own and his wife's necessities, to borrow from the neighbouring bankers sums which he was quite unable to pay in cash, but was able (so a well-authenticated story runs) to settle to the satisfaction of all parties by the exercise of a discreet patronage. The later history of the bank contrasts strangely with that of Parr's. Both businesses were started in the country, the one in Somerset and the other in Lancashire, with its head-quarters at the town of Warrington. But while Parr's Bank was always pushing forward with the immense expansion of the cotton trade, opening

THE DUTCH HOUSE CALLED THE CASTLE BANK: BANKING HOUSE OF STUCKEYS FROM 1826-1854

new branches, assimilating older banks, winning for itself a place in London and a position at the Clearing-House, Stuckey's has hitherto remained a West Country bank, reducing rather than increasing the number of its branches and working until quite recently with its head office at the tiny town of Langport, which has never numbered more than 2000 inhabitants. At the same time, it has remained a strong and wealthy institution. It holds nearly £7,000,000 of deposits; it has a larger note circulation than any other bank, except the Bank of England, and the market value of its capital is £1,751,000. We may be forgiven, too, if we recall the close connection which at one time existed between Stuckey's Bank and the *Economist*, when Walter Bagehot filled the two positions of editor and director. His great-uncle, Samuel Stuckey, had founded the bank, of which his father, Thomas Bagehot, was for thirty years managing director and vice-chairman. For several years Walter Bagehot was manager of local branches of Stuckey's Bank, and on leaving the West Country for London in 1861 he supervised the bank's London business at the same time that he was writing to such purpose on the theory of banking in the *Economist* and in his famous book called *Lombard Street.*"

CHAPTER III.

HOME AND FAMILY.

IN a large black leather pocket-book, from which Walter Bagehot's father was seldom parted, are still to be found in this year (1914) papers containing the certificates of Walter Bagehot's birth and of his baptism, events which took place eighty-six years ago. These were documents of momentous importance to a father who regarded his son from babyhood as his "greatest treasure". Walter Bagehot was born in Langport in what was called the Bank House, on the 3rd day of February, 1826.

The two families, Stuckey and Bagehot, appear to have performed an old-dance-like "change of sides" respecting their abodes in Langport, each alternately having lived at either end of the town. Eventually on the summits of the opposite hills, the Stuckeys lived at Hill House, the Bagehots at Herd's Hill. They led lives which were immensely interesting to themselves and to each other. Constant intercourse took place; a racy humour, vivid interest in public affairs, and intense interest of a friendly kind in each other's concerns, kept this intercourse very much alive. Beyond the Hanging Chapel was the home of Walter Bagehot's uncle Edward and his family, with whom his father and mother kept up a daily intercourse. Beyond that again, opposite Huish Episcopi Church, is the property of the Michell family, the squires of Huish parish, related through several marriages to the Bagehots and Stuckeys.

The earliest manuscript concerning Walter Bagehot's family on the Stuckey side is the Diary of Thomas Beedall, written by Walter Bagehot's great-grandfather, beginning

Sunday, 18th September, 1768. The following extract, which is a fair specimen of the contents of the book, does not show any intellectual proclivities that might have accounted for his great-grandson's genius. The handwriting is beautiful and the volume is bound handsomely in tooled vellum.

"Sunday, October 2nd, 1768. This morning had coak for breakfast—afterwards went to Langport Church to prayers and partook of the Holy Sacrament. Dined at home on a boiled leg of mutton with caper sauce, carrots, and potatoes. Drank water and treacle. In the afternoon went to Huish Church and heard a good sermon by the Rev. William Michell, on this text: 2nd Chapter of Ecclesiastes, 11th verse: 'I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do, and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.' Daughter Jenny drank tea at our house and in the evening Daughter Stuckey went to super and spent the evening with us with Mr. Sawtle and his wife. This day dry weather."

"Monday, October 3rd, 1768. This morning had coak for breakfast and rachit of a kidd of cyder sold to Daughter Stuckey, and went down several times to North Street House with John Hoare and with Long after apples to make cyder at Mr. Bagehot's. Dined at home on hash mutton, drank water cyder. In the afternoon went down and picked up apples in the orchard and spent the evening at home—this night Betsy and Nancy went to the play. It was *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, with a farce called *Chrononhotontlologos*. Nancy is to sleep at Daughter Stuckey's. This day was Bridgwater Fair and exceedingly fine weather."

In like manner the Diary is continued till the last entry on Sunday, 1st June, 1783. The monuments of the Beedall family are to be found in the west porch of Langport Church on either side of the large west window which my sister placed to the memory of Walter Bagehot. "Daughter Stuckey" married George, father of the notable "Uncle Vincent," and of Edith, Walter Bagehot's mother.

For two families to have "dominated Langport for 150 years from the middle of the eighteenth century," some

of their members must have been possessed of remarkable qualities. The dominion over which they reigned resembled somewhat an ancient republic on a diminutive scale, the commercial magnates being its rulers in every sense. In both the Bagehot and Stuckey families we find gifts of mind and character which, no less than their material possessions, won for them the exceptional position they held. Walter Bagehot would *explain* his family in a very amusing manner. He felt a genuine interest in his relatives. The prominent characteristics of the two families were entirely different. Probably they worked together so successfully on account of this difference. Each family had a distinctive character of its own, and each held its own. The Stuckey nature was shrewd, wilful, sociable and very hospitable. The remarkable amount of mental and animal vitality which it possessed showed itself more in active life than in intellectual pursuits, though Edith Stuckey, Walter's mother, was from a child as voracious a reader as her son. They were conscientious and masterful in carrying through all they undertook to do, and dominated those connected with them in business, not only through shrewd intelligence and forethought, but because they exercised their strong wills invariably on the side of straight dealing. They inspired the confidence necessary to dominate the unreasoning but not unshrewd West Country mind.

As a family the Bagehots were more intellectual than the Stuckeys. They were less robust, more retiring and dignified—perhaps more highly cultured. Their ancestors can be traced back to the fifteenth century, when one Richard Bagehot, *alias* Badger or Baghott, possessed the family property at Prestbury, Gloucestershire—a property held uninterruptedly by the Bagehots till the last century. Several of the members of the family were Knights, many were High Sheriffs, some were soldiers, others ecclesiastics. In 1684 William Bagehot of Prestbury married Anne de la Bere, a member of the ancient family who in 1635 purchased Southam, County Gloucester, from Cecil, Earl of Salisbury. In 1746 William Bagehot of Prestbury assumed the additional surname of De la Bere. In 1828, through the female line, his descendant succeeded to

the De la Bere estates at Southam and those also of Bagehot at Prestbury. The former he sold to Lord Ellenborough in 1832. His brother, Sir Paul Bagehot of Woodchester, Rodborough and Upper Lypial, County Gloucester, was High Sheriff for Gloucester.[1]

Walter Bagehot's great-grandfather came to Langport about 1747. His great-great-grandfather left the Church of England, probably following the wave of Unitarianism which swept over the Midlands in the eighteenth century. As Mr. Ross relates, his great-grandfather rejoined the Church of England on taking up his residence at Hill House, immediately opposite the noble building—All Saints' Church, Langport. But again Walter's own father reverted to nonconformity and became a Unitarian.

The Bagehot family influenced the people of Langport by personal dignity and refinement, which qualities, though probably hardly recognised by the county folk for what they were, gave weight to their position. Walter Bagehot's father had, moreover, a most determined will of his own, though he maintained it with quiet obstinate tenacity rather than with any show of power. He was a politician, a decided Whig, but he took an intellectual rather than a party view of politics. Though dignified and reserved in manner he was blessed with singularly deep and warm affections. He was a great lover of beauty in Nature. He planted and laid out the grounds of Herd's Hill with the eye of an artist, securing delightful vistas through the trees of the churches of Langport and Huish Episcopi and of the distant moorlands and hills. These still exist and make lovely vignettes from the walks and lawns. A print of the old Langport Bridge in Mr. Ross's book is a reproduction of one of Mr. Bagehot's water-colour drawings. There is another of the Hanging Chapel preserved at Herd's Hill. From childhood Walter Bagehot was devotedly attached to his father and his father to him.

When Walter Bagehot was born it was "Uncle Stuckey" who formed the social centre for the two families, both at

[1] Extracted from the Records of the College of Arms, London, and examined therewith this 3rd day of August, 1888. Albert W. Wood Garter.

Langport and in London. After leaving the Treasury he still kept open house in his London residence, 126 Sloane Street, where his relations would visit him during *the season* and enjoy some of the pleasures of the town. The following is a letter written by one Henry Sawtell, a distant cousin of the Stuckeys, containing a few graphic accounts of Walter Bagehot from the year 1835. It was written in answer to one from my sister, asking Mr. Sawtell to write down any memories he might have of him.

"Chetwode Vicarage,
"Buckingham, 29*th May*, 1882.

"My dear Mrs. Bagehot,

"I reserved your letter for a day in this quiet green spot, but with all the advantages of unwonted seclusion I can convey nothing to paper of the evanescent qualities of the humour which 'came off' your husband under all circumstances on to the surrounding facts and persons; the overhanging thatch of black hair, the marvellous eyes, the play of facial muscle, the lissom figure, the curiously impressive voice which nevertheless declined to adapt itself to platforms, even the preliminary gasp to bespeak attention and the flittering sense of fun as the paradox or unsuspected analogy found its way to the lips. While these are wanting, written description makes that seem tame which never failed to delight—never 'hovered round the confines of a truth' but darted at it and stereotyped it. It was a way of taking advantage of a peculiar state of things which was gone next minute, an insight into—coupled with an impatience of—anything which went half-way or missed the direct road altogether, which was half the charm of what never seemed meant for wit but just part of ordinary talk quaintly expressed.

"The portentous solemnity with which a Radical Aberdeen Professor demanded at my table to know the kernel of all the machinery by which we were governed (in 1853)—'*that is what I* want to get at, sirs,' evoked from Walter Bagehot, after a short pause, 'My impression is that the kernel is *the consolidated* fund, and *I* should like to get at *that!*'

"My own appearance, as the solicitor of a luckless hair-seating manufacturer at Crewkerne before the Bank Committee at Langport, to whom, on his behalf, I tendered—in aid of some rather short securities—a heap of policies on his life of long standing, was not rendered comfortable by the enquiry which broke the silence succeeding my statement—'Henry, will your client undertake to *expire* as part of the arrangement?'

"These things with the accessories I have named were fun in perfection, without them they are just nothing. I roared when I took up Mr. Hutton's memoir the other day and read the bit about a man's wife being his fault and his mother his misfortune, but two persons not devoid of humour to whom I read it separately could see little in it because the interlocutors were unknown to them and they could not see and hear it as I could.

"Mrs. Bagehot must, I think, have been barely eighteen when she married Joseph Prior Estlin. She was twenty-five when the shower of prosperity burst on the deserving head of her surviving brother Vincent—at thirty-eight she had been many years a very lively widow, brilliant and fascinating, and then she rewarded with her hand a devotion which nothing ever quenched, and which she had excited in the breast of a remarkably plodding young gentleman of twenty-eight, Thomas Watson Bagehot. While the son of this marriage was a very young child one of the three sons of her first union died of some illness, another of the effects of a coach accident under circumstances well known doubtless to you, and the third was growing up bereft of reason. Her own mind had been completely unhinged by these untoward events and had been but just restored when I was first made free of the household in 1835.

"About the Bagehots a good deal of curious information could be quarried, but I daresay the Guillaume Bagehot who figures in the roll of Battle Abbey had settled himself in Cambridgeshire, and the possessor of the silver snuff-box of the seventeenth century was entitled to the arms there described. (This snuff-box still exists in Walter's family.) They seem to

have flourished in Gloucestershire in those days and there is a brief pedigree of them in Atkyns. They lived for a generation or two in the picturesque old house in Langport opposite the church which has within the last few years given way to the existing south portion of Hill House—then they got down by the river into a buff-coloured dwelling with the mullioned windows, and of the garden of which some relics yet abide in the present garden at Herd's Hill, but which fell before the improvements which eased the traffic and ruined the effect of "Great Bow". The Robert Codrington Bagehot (the Codringtons were cousins of the Bagehots) and Mrs. Bagehot of my first remembrances had not then long moved up to Herd's Hill, and were most remarkable for a high tone of mind, great intelligence, an exalted standard of living and acting, and a sense of humour which indeed seemed to pervade the very air of the place from Herd's Hill to the Bank, and across to Mrs. Michell's—up again to Mrs. George Stuckey's—and in full hilarious shine kept on at the Hill.

"The parents of Walter Bagehot were then living in the Bank house, and he was just completing his ninth year. The first evening we met I got into trouble by proposing to assault him for beating me at chess (as Bishop Howley did Sydney Smith). The next day I was introduced to the scene of his studies which were being conducted (in the room over the entrance door of the Bank house) after a very singular fashion and apparently with a view to induce concentration of thought. He was "doing sums" with about twenty clocks all ticking in unison and striking to the minute around him (such being Vincent Estlin's whim of the hour), while his mother read *Quentin Durward* in as high a key and as rapidly as was possible, for the benefit of poor Vincent. Next year I was there again for a short space, but I think Walter must have been absorbed in study, as my sole reminiscence is of the Sunday afternoons at the Hill when after Church there was a kind of levee on the lawn of Hill House. Everybody owed something (many, everything) to the master and mistress there, and Mrs. Bagehot rather liked to exhibit her clever boy, who eluded her efforts by swarming up a great tree, and there

glaring down on the assembly from the topmost bough in a surprising manner and to the detriment of his Sabbath raiment. There was the Christmas of 1838 when we were mostly flooded in at Herd's Hill, Mrs. Bagehot administering alternate layers of the Greek Testament (with her own annotations) and *Oliver Twist*, but I think Walter was in a shy preoccupied stage just then. Three and a half years later he was all himself, with his standing leaps, his daring ventures on horseback, his absorbing love of children, and his conversational freshness, chiefly, as far as I was concerned, interrogatively as to what I, three years older, learnt and saw and heard in the great city, always with the result of making me feel that I had got hold of the little end of the stick. The next year, I suppose, he was launched in London, dwelling at the house of one Dr. Hoppus in Camden Street, and getting Sunday rests at the quiet nook on Hampstead Heath where his aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds, lived, and where we always met and delighted chiefly in old *Quarterly Reviews*. At this point Mr. Hutton takes him up with consummate insight and appreciative affection.

"I don't know that it was worth while to write all this in order to prove that my resources for the purpose in hand are utterly barren, but it is pleasant to go back to those days, and were it less so, I have the satisfaction of the little French maiden who lisped out her first song because she was asked :—

> 'En attendant, j'ai toujours l'avantage
> De vous montrer que je sais obeir.'

"I remain, dear Mrs. Bagehot,

"Yours sincerely,

"G. H. SAWTELL."

Mrs. Bagehot's principles were of the best, and her influence over Walter Bagehot was great. As it is necessary to mention the trouble which was brought into his life by the state of mental distress to which his mother was subject, it is all the more necessary to be explicit in recording the fine qualities her nature possessed. She had great charm and fascination. She had a power of infusing life into the atmosphere about her, of making it indeed vibrate with a

sense of activity and movement, very contagious in its effect. Her presence gave a feeling of zest to the living of life. Her intellectual vivacity brought into family life a keen relish for intellectual pleasures; she never failed to show an unselfish devotion to the interest of others, and, best of all, she stimulated the existence of all those about her with the invigorating tonic of humour. Even as I first knew her, at the age of seventy-two, she had a lovely complexion and other traces of beauty. Her voice in speaking I recall as one of the most delightful I ever heard. I can imagine I hear it still—the tone soft and persuasive, but in it withal an emphatic ring which made people attend. Both from his father and from his mother Walter Bagehot acquired a high standard of morals. From his studious father, who spared no thought or time in forwarding the intellectual, moral, and religious development of *his greatest treasure*, Walter acquired a solid grounding in methods of working which without doubt helped him later. But his humour, his happy temperament, his intellectual vitality—the salient qualities, in fact, which stamp Walter Bagehot's genius with so strong an individuality—were inherited from his mother.

There are doubtless disadvantages in postponing the writing of a memoir for many years after the subject has quitted this world's stage; but in the case of Walter Bagehot it was necessary that the stage should be cleared of all his nearest relations before such a record were attempted. Even those who cared for him, but who were less immediately involved in the special trouble of his home life, would have shrunk from making any allusion to it, till time had somewhat taken the sting out of that which was most painful to him in his life, and till it had become somewhat vague in the memory of the rising generation. Entirely inadequate, nevertheless, would be any attempt to write a memoir of Walter Bagehot were the fact concealed that his mother was at times insane. This was the tragedy of his life, the iron that entered into the soul. "Every trouble in life is a joke compared to madness," he would say. A tragedy it verily was; yet, had he not had to suffer the pain of it, the most admirable qualities in his nature might have remained but partially developed. Very pathetic

and beautiful was the manner in which he met the conditions forced into his life by this calamity. The brilliant vivacity of his nature and his genius for shining as a light among all who were intellectually and socially of the best, was not dimmed by the shadow cast over his life ; this home trouble made him in no sense morbid, yet he never sought enjoyment at the expense of any help he could give his father in the family trial. This willingness to bear his share of the burden arose not so much, I think, from any conscious sense of duty, as from a yet higher impulse, growing out of the rich soil of his natural affections. He could not have done otherwise. Never was the burden laid on another shared and borne with more loyalty and tender affection than was Mrs. Bagehot's infirmity by her husband and her son.

The effect of such a trial is naturally to isolate a family from the ordinary social life led in most country homes where neighbours keep up a friendly intercourse with one another. Such an isolation in itself was uncongenial to Walter's natural bent. He had genial feelings towards his fellow-creatures; still, until he married, he felt himself too much one with his father's and mother's home life to desire to seek much society beyond Herd's Hill. In a letter written to him by his friend Richard Hutton we find a criticism of this disinclination to attach himself closely to any one out of the home circle.

Sunday, 10*th December*, 1845.
Bei der Madame Schmidt 13 *Behrenstrasse—Berlin.*

"My dear Bagehot,

"It is a great pleasure to sit down to answer your letter which was indeed with its enclosure exceedingly welcome. I am glad to hear you have been nearly free from giddiness which I fear most, and not had much headache. I don't care for your apathy much, for it is not a state likely to last. Only I wish you had more interests around you, not merely of intellect but of feeling, which are with you too much limited to the exclusive interests of home. In London you always

appear to me to be a *perfect* expression of the class idea of a young man studying in lodgings, without *differentia specifica*. Of course as regards *social* relations you go to places and to fellow-students, but *biding* nowhere; and while others seem to be always definable with respect to some distinct circle of individuals, there is no particular distance from your lodgings that enters more than any other into your functional equation. I don't think this is either good for you, or your intellect; the apathy you describe I think arises from this absence of positive interest and forces in your London life, which none can help missing though in very different degrees. I know I could never work well and with energy without *real* friends near me, to whom my thoughts and attention may sometimes turn entirely. I do not mean simply men one *likes*, but men one loves; and I should be here in a state of quiet apathy, just like yours, if I had not Martineau near me to supply the attractive force that intellectual pursuits must often fail in, when the mind is ill or weary. All your friends you seem to *like*, but they do not seem to be resources that instantly and spontaneously fill the vacuum that rational, moral, and even religious interests will often leave. And I know when this is the case, a kind of reverie, which is not over-beneficial to the mind, supplies the place which human interests were, I think, meant to fill. I wish you had not simply more friends but more attachments."

Though Mr. Hutton was so devoted and intimate a friend, I doubt whether Walter confided much of his home trouble to him. He stayed at Herd's Hill before and after Mrs. Bagehot's death, and he must have known of her mental infirmity; but she did not take to him, notwithstanding Walter's endeavour to make them friends. Mr. Hutton's noble, simple nature was not, I think, keenly alive to intricacies in sensitiveness. He would have had to be told of the pain, and might have been too explicit in expressing his sympathy, and that would not have suited Walter's nerves. Walter most openly mentioned it to those who understood more instinctively, but who did not *discuss* it with him. In the letter quoted Mr. Hutton did not guess what probably was the fact, namely,

that the apathy from which Walter suffered was but the reaction of over-strung nervous excitement.

He left his life in London, giving up the Bar, to which he had been called in 1852, to associate himself with his father in business so as to live at home. He gave other reasons for abandoning law as a profession, and these probably might of themselves have induced him to do so; but the choice he made of joining the business at Langport was made clearly with the object of helping in the home trouble. A less unselfish nature, gifted with genius such as Walter Bagehot's, endowed with such social powers that, without any effort on his part, he could readily acquire influence over his fellow-men, would not have probably chosen a career so distasteful as that of the counting-house at Langport, in order to brighten the atmosphere in a home overshadowed by this cloud. It may appear presumption to venture an opinion as to how far the trial that Walter Bagehot had to bear was favourable or unfavourable to the development of his genius. In a sense such trouble may have stimulated his faculties by adding zest to his intellectual pursuits; but possibly if he had enjoyed more leisured conditions, had the constant strain on his nervous system been at times relaxed, this might have induced a musing habit of mind more calculated to inspire work of a distinctly creative kind. His salient gifts being imagination and originality, it is difficult to believe that some deterrent obstacle did not exist which kept the more distinctly inventive faculties in the background. The extraordinary physical vitality and happiness of temperament which he enjoyed in early youth had certainly much to subdue them in after years. The disturbing influences developed doubtless fine qualities of character, but it is possible that they had also a numbing effect on any creative proclivities that may have been latent in him. For the full development of these, a certain spring and unfettered impulsiveness in the working of the mind may be required. It is possible that the subduing nature of his conditions may have suppressed such an impetus; who can say?

In the first few pages of Walter Bagehot's essay on Macaulay is found the description of the particular kind of

nature possessed by those who "are unfortunately born scientific," and an amusing description it is. He further analyses "the minds of the crowd of men". This is also amusingly described, and ends with the following: "The impulse to busy ourselves with the affairs of men goes further than the simple attempt to know and comprehend them; it warms us with a further life; it incites us to stir and influence those affairs; its animated energy will not rest till it has hurried us into toil and conflict." This impulse Walter Bagehot possessed in a marked degree, and so did his mother. It might be asked why this impulse did not lead him to a more definite public position than he ever occupied?

He made three attempts to enter Parliament, but failed. His genius has been more widely appreciated since his death than it was during his lifetime. I think the true answer to this query may be found in the fact that there was ever an unrecognised deterring influence which slackened the issues of success on obvious and popular lines. Insanity isolates. It causes a reserve in the natures of those suffering from contact with it, depriving them of the feeling of absolute sympathy and open comradeship with those who know nothing of "the dark realities". Genial, sympathetic, sociable, witty, Walter Bagehot undoubtedly was, yet at the same time profoundly reserved. The things that touched him the nearest were but rarely disclosed. This reserve was felt, though not understood by the populus who ordains notoriety. It was only through intercourse with his few intimate friends and with the great men with whom he came into contact in later days, that his extraordinary gifts were discerned and duly appreciated; and he died before such estimates had filtered through to the multitude.

But even if his exceptional circumstances stunted his inventive side and his career as regards popular success, they clearly developed his philosophical lines of thought. The weight of "dark realities" was ever present to test the proportion of things, to give a standard of the relative importance of human thought and feelings. These "dark realities" can prove to the uttermost what is in reality sorrow, and what condition of

mind can induce resignation. They open the doors to many mysteries, though, while doing so, they prove that in human experience there is no reaching the outlet which can explain why they are sent to bewilder and pain us. A firm faith in an over-ruling spiritual guidance through the most troubled waters was the ever-present source of strength to Walter's father in his life's trial. With such an example before him, Walter, from early childhood, gained a profound sense of the reality of the spiritual life, a belief which he ever retained as a fundamental fact in our humanity. Many of the earlier essays contain allusions to "dark realities," though probably such allusions might not be obvious to those who were not intimately acquainted with Walter Bagehot's home life; but in the essay on William Cowper every reader must, I think, feel that he had had a personal experience of such mysteries.

It must not be gathered from the fact that this tragedy existed, that the life at Herd's Hill was a melancholy life. Tragic it might be at times, but never was it tame or dull. *Events* were never lacking—painful events at times, but events. There was no stagnation, there was always the possibility of something unexpected. Anxiety in itself is a moving quantity. Moreover, the delightful qualities in Mrs. Bagehot and Walter gave the happy days a great charm. Never, probably, was there a case where insanity produced a slighter permanent effect. This, doubtless, was the result of the atmosphere of love and affection which surrounded her.

Mrs. Bagehot was instrumental in obtaining a church for Hambridge, a village five miles distant from Herd's Hill. She wrote a volume of sacred verses which she sold for the benefit of the building fund, and initiated the raising of a subscription for the same.

People have a way of speaking of fascinating women as if they were a species of witches, who, with black arts, bring evil into the lives of men. The most fascinating women, on the contrary, are those who, like Mrs. Bagehot, use their natural gift of charm to throw sunshine into the whole atmosphere around them; who are, moreover, clever and endowed with a right judgment; whose qualities of heart and head are equally

enlisted in making themselves and others happy and good. Her maternal feelings were unusually strong. She had a motherly affection to give to all children. A Bagehot cousin lost his wife and was left with two children. As he was an officer in the navy and sent on foreign service, Mr. and Mrs. Bagehot took his boy and gave him the position of foster-brother to Walter, and he received the same loving care and attention they lavished on their own child. Her nature soared above all the littlenesses often found in a small town, and though by nature socially inclined and interested in the lives of all her neighbours, she entered into their interests from a larger, more human and humorous point of view than is common. Her sense of humour carried her over many difficulties in her relations with her neighbours, though her *principles* insisted on her telling "*the truth, the whole truth*, and *nothing but the truth*" on every possible occasion, and the whole truth is not always welcome. Her letters, of which hundreds are preserved, are very amusing reading. Certain subjects especially aroused her argumentative inclinations. Prominent among these were religion; the Poor Law which, as it then existed, she entirely condemned; and the shortcomings of the Unitarian creed. Characteristic of the style of her letters is the following which Mrs. Bagehot wrote to Walter when he was sixteen:—

"10*th May*, 1842.

"My dearest Walter,

". . . I have been reading over many of my beloved Stuckey's[1] letters to dearest Papa this week, and he and I were much struck with the similarity of the style with yours and in affection for his own Mamma—or rather in parental affection I hope you resemble each other. Oh! I have the blessed assurance that that is a feeling which survives the grave and lives purified and anew through all eternity.

"Now that Aunt and Uncle are gone (Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Stuckey went every spring to London for *the season*), my

[1] Stuckey Estlin, her son by her first marriage, was at the age of twenty killed in a coach accident.

popping place is to Mrs. Kent. I scold her much for caring totally (unlike you and Papa and *me* now) about people and their attentions. She has always got some little fad about 'cold manners,' default of courtesies and enquiries, and fresh peccadilloes of the kind she punishes by a cross proud look (*entre nous*), and then—there they are—all turned to icicles, and send each other to Coventry! She is just in this way now with —— who has a tendency not to think 'small beer' of himself and to swell out to a barrel or a butt. How one does wish to expand the good in humanity, to repress the bad, and raise all hearts and minds above the petty jealousies of life, and fix them upon the sublime views of the immortal soul and its life to come and which is to last for ever!! Instead of which the petty interests, and petty complaints of the body—body, body are filling every mind and occupying every tongue, and yet one must not wish to be '*no*-body' either—by way of a pun for you!"

Again three years later she writes:—

"11*th June*, 1845.
"*Day of St. Barnabas and my beloved Stuckey's death.*

"My own Blessing,

"A line I must dash off to thank you for yours. I was a *leetle* disappointed to hear that you thought we had better not have the pleasure of your company before next week, and, being thankful you feel well enough to stay, must not, I suppose, say a word against it upon my principle of 'trimming the lamps' vigorously, and 'watching in our various duties and callings with our various talents that we may return those "who have the rule over us" and our Lord His own with usury'; but if Dr. Bright recommends a quicker transition to purer air, which he might, as there is now quite a change in the weather and you suffer from the heat so much, how fervently we shall delight to welcome you. I need not say I love and value you as much as I loved and valued Stuckey at the same age, more I cannot; but I think my love for you has been happier, more roses and fewer thorns,

because you have been since your birth so much more happily situated, and from the least boy ever joined with joy and pleasure in the same mental pursuits I have ever followed the most myself—not that I must ape the literature that you have (though I have always been fond of books, since, as a child, it was often a loud sentence of reproach to me—'Edith Stuckey, do not sit so lost over a book'), for when I was talking over your argument with William Wood, not only Papa had told me I was stupid, by giving me your explanation of the fact about Burke, but Aunt Reynolds gravely said 'now Edith, you are not to infer that Walter was wrong because you think him so, for you know you *are* ignorant,' which I am quite ready to admit, only I thought to myself—I do like Walter to make that clear to others what is clear I dare say to his own research, so rapidly improving and telling; and when he does, I think I can *sense him*, though profoundity in the subject may still be wanting. I am not sure whether Aunt Reynolds wanted to put you up or me down—both I hope. My elastic mind is daily recovering from the loss of my beloved brother.[1] My mind, like his *must be cheerful*, from its vivid enjoyment of blessings left; but your dear Aunt is exactly the same. I think of my own brother constantly as if, in the transfer to a purer state, conversation and communion, that I thank God I sought on earth, are still carried on with him—and to indulge and repeat the hope which scripture allows, as one dear friend after another is borne to Heaven,

> That through their Soul as angels bright
> They hover o'er our sphere,
> And shed new beams of grace and light
> On those who loved them here;

and it seems as if your dear Uncle's voice could say to you, in better prose perhaps than my poetry,—'Walter, you must make yourself a clever fellow and be a stay of the family, and a comfort to your mother when I am gone'."

Once it was a question, when Walter was studying at the

[1] Mr. Vincent Stuckey, founder of Stuckey's Bank, died in 1845.

Bristol College, of her joining him at Clevedon without his father. She writes :—

"Papa said, 'you can go if you like,' but upon my eyes sparkling, and heart leaping, added, 'but I think you had better stay at home'. Now I think both of us are aware, that without him to take care of me and keep me together, as my imagination and feelings are so prone to travel rail-road speed, my body must be kept at a more temperate pace, and not be allowed to do too much in a short time."

Many of Mrs. Bagehot's letters afford an interesting psychological study. Her mind never appeared to be enfeebled by her deranged ideas ; at times she might almost have been said to have flirted with her delusions, not treating them quite seriously herself. Walter told us of a characteristic scene which took place towards the end of her life. One morning, for some unknown reason, she got it into her head during breakfast that she could not speak to Walter, and therefore remained dumb; but this silent situation before long became dull ; so she wrote on a slate something she wanted him to know, and hung the slate round her neck and appeared in his study where he was writing. She was standing mute in the doorway when he looked up suddenly, and saw her and the slate, and the two burst out laughing together. Her tongue was loosed, and they talked together in a perfectly rational manner.

After his mother had seen my sister for the first time, Walter writes :—

"LANGPORT, 19*th March*, 1858.

"My mother was delighted with *you* and did nothing but talk about your bright expression. This morning she is not very well, and her mind will not be clear for a day or two till it has cleared itself by writing and time. She is generally not so well for a day or two after an unusually good day which yesterday was. Her mind is such a strange mixture of sanity and insanity that it is impossible to say what will or will not be good for her."

In many directions Walter and his mother had much in

common. He felt a sympathy with many of her attitudes of mind which might by others have been thought to belong to her delusions. He was often more lenient to his mother's views, however unusual they might appear, than to the foolishnesses of many so-called sane persons. He had little patience with the pompous nonsense of the worldly and self-interested who override any sign of want of balance in others with contemptuous pity, these being nevertheless in essential qualities of heart and understanding immeasurably their superiors.

With all its trials and "dark realities," the home life at Herd's Hill was a beautiful life. Religion, affection, both deep and real, a high intellectual standard of culture and unselfish aims, gave to the atmosphere of this home life a distinction but rarely found, and developed sound thought and feeling that proved to Walter Bagehot an unusually good equipment in life. Especially is it interesting to recognise the strong impression religion made on a mind which has proved so illuminating to the present generation of thinkers perhaps not too prone to receive deep religious impressions. Walter Bagehot would say when it was a question of abolishing religious teaching in schools,—"It is one thing to have a dogmatic religion implanted in children from their babyhood, however less dogmatic their views may become as they grow to be men and women, and quite another to bring up children without any religious creed at all. We have yet to see what a nation would be like whose men and women had never had any religious training whatever given to them as children."

CHAPTER IV.

EARLY EDUCATION.

WALTER BAGEHOT'S education was begun by a governess, Miss Jones, who came into the family when Walter was five years old, and remained a faithful and confidential retainer for forty years. From earliest boyhood he learnt much that was worth having from his parents. Moreover, their intelligent devotion engendered in him a happiness of being, a joyful play of mind during the first years of his life which stimulated his mental powers when they first began to move forward. It gave him that confidence which a child wants before he dares be himself. Much strength for the future is lost by a want of happiness in childhood. Other things may be learnt through the discipline of the cross, but for the bud to expand quite healthily sunshine it must have, and sunshine in abundance Walter Bagehot had as a child in his home life. Furthermore, he grew up in an atmosphere steeped in religion—and in a variety of views of religion.

When he was about six years old he wrote the following letter to his Aunt Reynolds—his father's sister. The words are written between lines, very distinct—each letter being half an inch high :—

(*Directed*) MRS. REYNOLDS, LONDON.

"MY VERY DEAR AUNT,

"I thank you for the book you sent me, and Brother thanks Uncle. I want to ask you for another Daily Food for Christians, because keeping this sometimes in my pocket and reading the text and poetry in it every morning, it is nearly worn out, and I am afraid I shall lose the leaves.

Mamma is afraid you will think me a bold and troublesome little boy, but she says I am yet so ignorant that I do not know, but I am doing *you* a favour. I do not agree with her. I hope you do not either. The new man servant James 2nd is come to-day, our James is going upon the Hill (Hill House). Papa and I have been playing a good game of top. All send their love and to dear Kate too.

"Your affectionate Nephew,

"WALTER BAGEHOT."

Mrs. Bagehot doubtless thought that her sister-in-law could not be given a greater treat than to be asked for another of her evangelical tracts.

Walter's father was a spiritually-minded Unitarian; therefore he attended the Unitarian service conducted by his father in the drawing-room of Herd's Hill every Sunday morning. His mother was a Churchwoman of decided Church of England views, therefore he went with her to the services in Langport and Huish churches alternately every Sunday afternoon. His Aunt and Uncle Reynolds, to whom all his life he was much attached, were extremely Low Church, and from them he heard much denunciation of the Pope and the Papists.

Mrs. Reynolds, a sister of Mr. Bagehot's, was possessed of a happy sense of humour, and was noted as being "excellent company". Mr. Reynolds was an able and good man, and had had a remarkable career. After distinguishing himself for sixteen years in the Civil Service, from the age of thirty-two[1] he devoted his heart labour to religious causes. He

[1] "John Stuckey Reynolds was born on the 13th of September, 1791. His mother, who died in 1803, was a sister of the late Mr. Vincent Stuckey, the well-known Somersetshire banker. In 1806 he entered the Treasury, and his zeal and efficiency in the public service very soon attracted attention; his promotion was rapid, he received a series of special votes of thanks from the Lords of the Treasury, a grant of money was made to him in 1815 as a reward for distinguished exertions, and his income was increased by cumulative appointments. He filled the office of Private Secretary to three successive Secretaries of the Treasury, and for a short time to the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool; and as Secretary

founded the Home and Colonial Training Schools in London, besides forwarding the Colonial and Continental Church Society, African Missions, the Malta College, the London City Mission, and various other religious enterprises. He started in 1823 and maintained for many years an efficient infant school at Fulham, and in 1828 with a few friends, Mr. Reynolds established the *Record* newspaper, and for more than forty years promoted its welfare. On a somewhat different line Mr. Reynolds was also an authority. He was a first-rate judge of a horse. Walter Bagehot never bought one without consulting "my Uncle Reynolds".

While studying law in London, Walter Bagehot paid various visits to Oxford, staying with his friend Constantine Prichard, a fellow of Balliol. There he came under the influence of John Henry Newman, whose Anglican sermons he admired enormously. Stuckey Coles, well known as one of the leading lights among Anglicans, was his cousin, and established and

to the Irish Revenue Commission of 1822-3, he had a large share in reconstituting the fiscal system of that country ; later on he was one of the heads of the Commissariat Department, combining with that office two, if not three others. . . . Of this long career of active public life the culminating point may be dated at 1823, at which time the path of ambition seemed to present itself to Mr. Reynolds in no common degree. His exertions and abilities had attracted the notice of an influential nobleman, who offered him a seat in Parliament, and the whole career of high office appeared to open before him. But at that very juncture, a sermon preached at a village church near Dublin by the friend who has lived to commit his remains to the grave, so impressed him with a sense of the spiritual dangers almost certain to wait on worldly advancement—at all events in his own case—that he at once resolved never again to take a step for the furtherance of his temporal interests. On this resolution he received the Lord's Supper before leaving the Church, and during the remaining fifty years of his life he never recurred to that occasion without an expression of devout thankfulness to Him who inspired the vow and gave him grace rightly to keep it. . . . Mr. Reynolds married in 1819, Mary Anne, eldest daughter of Robert Bagehot, Esq., of Herd's Hill, near Langport, Somerset, and in her endeared society and co-operation found, for more than forty years, an unfailing support. A monument in the form of the Reynolds Memorial Schools was erected when he died in 1874 in connection with the Home and Colonial Training Schools in London."— *Memoir of John Reynolds* by "A Friend".

supported a centre for Anglican priests at Shepton Beauchamp, eight miles from Herd's Hill, where his father was the "Squarson". At the age of sixteen Walter Bagehot went to University College in London, and there met his life-long friend, Richard Hutton, who at that time intended to become a Unitarian Minister, as his father had been before him. Mr. Hutton and Walter Bagehot kept up a constant correspondence, the subjects of many of their letters being Moral Philosophy and Religion. Theology never took a more prominent part in any layman's life of thought than it did in that of Walter Bagehot's, and few divines have mastered their Bible more thoroughly than he did, thanks to his mother's insistent teaching.

As will be seen in the following letter written by his father while the family was at Blue Anchor spending the usual holiday by the sea, Walter early began to try his hand at poetry.

(*Addressed*) MASTER WALTER BAGEHOT, BLUE ANCHOR (*aged* 7).

"LANGPORT,
"17*th June*, 1833.

"MY DEAR BOY,

"I cannot let Miss Jones go without thanking you for your letter. I assure you I wish myself back again with you very much indeed and should be glad to hear the sound of the dashing waves and to climb the rocks and brave the deep and journey about with Mamma and you picking spicata —but I must not think of it yet, for little or great boys must not be idle either, and I must do my work before I play. The mail with its four horses soon took me away from you on Friday and carried me through a very pretty country to Taunton where Bob was waiting for me and brought me home just about the time of your fifth dip as I calculated.

"Mamma tells me you are becoming a poet and I shall look forward some day or other to our having a 'Sir Walter' in our own family.

"Your sword is sent, and as to-morrow is the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo, I suppose you will be very grand on

the occasion. How would you have liked living at Brussels when the cannons began to roar and the soldiers were summoned to the field?

"I must close directly as Miss Jones is just going off in the phaeton."

This said sword played an active part in Walter's life at that time. He would use it at Herd's Hill to lash off the heads of flowers with terrible force, imagining himself the leader of hosts and the demolisher of thousands and ten thousands of the Saracens. He lived much in his imagination, and his mother and aunt, Mrs. Michell, who when a widow lived constantly at Herd's Hill, recounted to us many of his exploits as a child while led by its inspirations. His serious education began at the age of eight or nine as a day scholar under the teaching of the notable Mr. Quekett, for fifty-six years the able master of the anciently endowed Langport Grammar School, still flourishing in the old building, half way up the Hill of Langport. During the last year when Walter attended this school, he wrote to his mother while she was visiting her brother in Sloane Street the following letter—

"18*th May*, 1838.

"We are all going on very well without you, and Papa and I have such nice chats about Sir R. Peel and the little Queen. Papa has quite made up his mind since he had read our friend the Duke's speech that the Queen did quite right and blames 'the Right Hon. Baronet' for making the ladies of so much consequence since they could only use the ladies' privilege of railing against everybody and everything. I have done my lessons most days and of course find I cannot do them nearly as well without you, particularly the French. Remember my French dictionary. Do you think I ever can survive two days' holidays without you? I think I may say *possibly;* but I suppose, or rather am certain, that I shall miss you very much. I have read the review of Doctor Cumming's work in the *Monthly*, and like him much better since I find he thinks Egypt a delightful country and advises some persons to go out with the intention of building a boarding-house for the

sick, travellers, etc. I hope some one will take his advice. I have some thoughts of spending a month or two there!

"And now, my dear Mamma, I must conclude with entreating you to remember that everywhere you carry the thought of your affectionate son,

"WALTER BAGEHOT.

"Excuse bad writing for, as Jenny Deans says, I have 'but one and ill pen'."

Later in the year Mrs. Bagehot visits her sister-in-law, Mrs. Reynolds, at Hampstead, and Walter writes:—

"LANGPORT,
"*Thursday Evening*, 1838.

"This day is the first of November. Oh, how different from the last two! The comparison makes me feel so happy that you are not gone away ill. I am in a great deal better spirits since Papa came home. I know it ought not to be so, but I can't help it.

"The water has got up into the Moor which occasions great commotions in the school for fear it will be too wet to have a bonfire and let off fireworks. T. Paul surmises that they have let the water in because the boys shall not have a bonfire; but the fact wants confirmation, he having, as I can learn, no authority for it but his own thoughts. I have to write the Life of Alfred the Great for Papa. I find it rather difficult, more so I think than the Battle of Mantinea. I have read his reign in Hume who doesn't of course breath a syllable about religion but praises him most extremely on account of his improvements in the English Law and Literature."

To his Papa, he writes:—

"Since you have told me to give an account of the battle of Marathon in my own words, I will do it to the best of my ability."

Then follows a short but excellent account of the battle. On 8th October, 1838, again he writes:—

"My dear Papa,

"I will now, as you requested, attempt, and I hope to your satisfaction, the Life of Alfred (justly surnamed the Great). I shall consider Alfred in his double character of a prince and scholar, and to render his reign intelligible I shall give a short account of the Anglo-Saxons down to that time."

Whereupon follows a very long essay full of instruction. On 13th October, 1838, he writes :—

"Since you were pleased with my account of the battle of Marathon, I will try to succeed better in that of Mantinea."

On 25th November, he writes :—

"My dear Mamma,

"I will now attempt the life of St. Augustine of Hippo. This bulwark of orthodoxy was born at Tagaste, a town in Africa."

A very long account of the life of the Saint follows. On 18th December, 1838, he writes :—

"My letter to Mamma contained, as you know, an account of St. Augustine; this one will contain a brief" (not very brief) "life of Julius Caesar."

To finish up this course of six essays he writes a very lengthy one to his Mamma :—

"This letter will contain an account of Socrates."

All six essays, written in three months, are remarkable as the work of a boy of twelve. Walter Bagehot had already learned how to read, in itself an art, also he had learned how to grip the main points of his subject, and could manage his detail with creditable skill.

It may be thought that too much space has been accorded to Walter Bagehot's birthplace, earlier life, home and family, but in order to convey a true likeness of him, I feel the aid of his surroundings from his childhood must be enlisted. His genius singled him out from his belongings; but that genius was moulded very directly by the atmosphere of his home life, and by the characters of his relations. Unlike many distinguished men who pass out into the world from their early home into a new atmosphere of feeling and associations,

Walter Bagehot never let go in any sense the ties and interests that bound him to the family life at Herd's Hill. Though his intellect moved on singularly detached and independent lines, his affections, which filled so large a part of his nature, clung tenaciously to those he cared for, and to those for whom he had any reason to feel grateful.

The next move in Walter Bagehot's education was to Bristol College, where he remained three years, from August, 1839, to the summer holidays of 1842. Here his career was brilliant. On entering the College, being thirteen years of age, he took up four subjects—Classics, Mathematics, German and Hebrew—and, as a rule, came out first at the examinations in all four; sometimes in one subject far ahead of competitors who had made that one their sole study. During part of the last year of his studies there he was in a class by himself. He worked during these three years with great zeal and enjoyment, and found time out of school hours to take private lessons with the Mathematical Master of the college, to gratify his passion for reading, and to attend lectures given by the well-known Dr. Carpenter on Natural Philosophy, Zoology, and Chemistry. He made friends with two of his fellow students and was looked up to by all the boys. His exceptional gifts, combined with great natural modesty, high spirits, and the curiously powerful influences his individuality and original humour exercised, gave him from early youth a very distinct position of his own.

His father, himself the most modest of men, inculcated early in Walter the "charm" of modesty. "As I said in my first letter to you," he writes, "work as hard as you can, but be modest, for to be so is a great charm in boys, and the more so, the cleverer they are."

With a few other students, he lived with the Rev. E. Bromley at Clifton, but spent most of his non-working hours at the houses of Dr. Prichard and Mr. Estlin, Mr. Estlin being the brother of his mother's first husband, and Dr. Prichard's wife, Mr. Estlin's sister. His intimate friends were Killigrew Wait, who became a prominent citizen in Bristol and Member for Gloucester, and Sir Edward Fry, who gives the following

description of Walter's appearance as he recollects it at that time :—

"Bagehot, when I first knew him, might perhaps be described as a lanky youth, rather thin and long in the legs, with a countenance of remarkable vivacity and characterised by the large eyes which were always noticeable, and about which he used at one time to entertain amusing conceits. He used to say that Crabbe Robinson had got on at the Bar by his chin, and that he hoped to do the like by his own eyes."

Two hundred and more letters have been preserved which were interchanged between Walter and his parents when he was at Bristol College. His father's natural tastes seemed at variance with the work which he had chosen as his occupation in life. His conscientiousness is, however, the more evident on account of this variance. Literary, political, and intellectual pursuits generally, and those which nurtured the sense of beauty, were the natural bent of his mind ; whereas, probably from a sense of duty, Mr. Bagehot chose a path in life which was, comparatively speaking, intellectually restricted. Once having chosen it, his constancy and tenacity made him continue in it with unfailing devotion. By far the greater part of his life was usurped by business in the counting houses of Stuckey's Bank, and of the Merchant's business at "the Bridge" ; and, however uncongenial such a life may often have been, his conscientiousness never allowed him to indulge in his more favourite pursuits in or out of business hours, if any business could be forwarded by his attending to it. He looked upon being ill as a great treat, for he could then indulge in the "forced leisure" which enabled him to enjoy life. He wrote to Walter on 11th December, 1842 : "During my illness I have had one half day, nay nearly two, of the luxury of the leisure forced on me, and have read some of McIntosh's life with great interest ; but Saturday and Sunday, when I was first taken, were days of suffering and annoyance." In the same letter he writes : "Her (Walter's mother) mind is in a nervous state, which a trifle seems occasionally to excite and could ill bear any serious burden, so I have not had so much to delight me as in some of my illnesses."

In intercourse with his boy, however, he felt he could combine intellectual pleasure with parental duty. Walter, from childhood, besides being the life and fun of the home, was also an intellectual companion both to his father and mother. When the parting had to come and he went to College at Bristol, this interesting intercourse was continued through letters in which public, as well as private matters, were fully discussed between them.

"I travelled on to Cheddar," his father writes, after leaving Walter at College, "with my thoughts wholly fixed on you, and with a parent's prayer for your happiness, and I believe I have thought of little else since my return; and both Mamma and I are longing to hear from you. I drank tea at Cheddar in the room in which we had so happy a breakfast the day before; and afterwards, when the rain ceased, strolled up the hill among the rocks, which, in the shade of the evening, looked very beautiful and grand. I moralised a little there, and then set off; but before I came home, both Felix and I were heartily tired, and I had a sad headache."

Ten days later he writes: "I wish I could be with you, but as that cannot be, we must gladden each other's hearts by writing as often as we can, and telling each other, not only what is passing without, but within us, and keeping up a constant interchange of thought. Everything good is interesting to us, and we long for your letters as much as you could wish. . . . It must be Stummy's (nickname for Watson, Walter's 'foster-brother') province to give you a history of the important events that are constantly, as usual, occurring here—the Kite flying, the Gull crying, etc., etc.; but you may picture us to yourself, wandering about at Herd's Hill, still admiring its bright mornings and serene and beautiful moonlight nights, although having lost in you one of its greatest charms, we cannot feel the same lightheartedness we sometimes did when you were at home, and I hope to do again, when you return."

Walter dutifully carried out his parents' wish that he should keep a journal which still exists and which gave them a detailed account of the hours, the nature, and the special difficulties of his various studies. Much as he relished these

studies, he counted the months, weeks and days to the holidays, and enjoyed them when they came with intoxicating delight.

After returning to Bristol College after the first Easter holidays, Walter writes to his father:—

"When I was reading Smollett the other day I met with a very curious instance of the dislike political men have to 'the dreary realms of Opposition,' and how much consistency one party is willing to sacrifice, if it can but embarrass its opponents. When the Whigs were in office, Queen Anne wished them to use their whole influence to pass the Bill for the Union of Scotland and England, through the English Parliament; and the Tories unsuccessfully opposed it, and year after year they went on battling, the Tories constantly bringing forward the Bill for the repeal of the Union. At last Queen Anne quarrelled with her Whig Ministers, and the Tories came into power. But Queen Anne made an express condition of their taking office that they would no longer contend for the repeal of the Union. On the meeting of Parliament, the Whigs brought forward a motion for the repeal of that Union which they had so long supported; and which Union was upheld by the influence of the Tories who had so long opposed it.

"I cannot be sorry that you miss me, and I do not know that I shall try. Write to me again very soon."

His father answers his letter:—

". . . I was interested in the account you gave me of what you had read in Smollett. It is sad, indeed, to see to what extent party feeling carries both able, and in the main, honest men; and there is nothing which we have to learn more difficult, and that requires more untiring watchfulness and firmer principle, than the method of preserving the mind from improper influences. A strong love of truth and the seeking it for its own sake, must be the ground on which all our endeavours must rest; but there are too many enemies ready to displace us, so that we must be ever on our guard, and ready to defend ourselves. A love of ease, and an unwillingness to examine into the foundation of things long settled, as far as we are concerned—a fondness for our own opinion, and a dislike of allowing that we were, or are mis-

taken—are some among the numerous enemies to be resisted, beside the heavy and weighty troops of pounds, shillings and pence, and patronage and power."

Mrs. Bagehot as a rule spent part of the London season with her brother in Sloane Street. Letters relate how she drove as far as Andover in his coach. She writes to Walter on 1st June, 1840:—

"Herd's Hill,
"*1st June*, 1840.

"My dearest Walter,

". . . It is now fixed that I am to go to London on Thursday next. When I walked round the garden with dearest papa and Watson last evening which was a very beautiful one, and the birds were singing, I thought how often I should wish to be there! but still, with dearest Uncle Stuckey and all the glories of the Parks, I trust I shall do very well."

Walter's mother keenly relished these visits and kept up a lively intercourse by letter with Walter and her husband during his absence from home.

"Sloane Street,
"*5th June*, 1840.

"Having just informed your dearest Papa of my safe arrival here, my dearest Walter, I thought I should like to tell you, and to beg you to write.

"Uncle Stuckey looking well and cheerful, but calling himself 'very ill' and saying he must go out of town, so hopes I am not going to stay long.

"Eliza (Mr. Vincent Stuckey's daughter) was close to the Duke of Wellington the other evening at the concert of Ancient Music, and alack! thought he was looking very old and shaky. He seemed very attentive to his daughter-in-law, the Marchioness of Druro, who is beautiful. I left husband in the midst of paint and bustle. He talks now of coming up next week (which all hope he will do) and choosing furniture, and then leaving me here to purchase it—and then perhaps I may come home by way of Bristol, and call for you. Just

going into Town to buy a new bonnet! I hope you are longing for the holidays, to be with your dear Papa and ever fond mother,

"EDITH BAGEHOT.

"Heaven bless you! I do not like being farther away!"

In February, 1841, Walter writes:—

"I beg leave to remind you that next month I am coming home. And that next month is nearly come. I do long to be with you all again; and I picture you all to myself, as I am sitting in the long evening all alone: Watty doing his sums, and Papa endeavouring in vain to instil into him some small glimmering of what he is about, and 'somebody' (query who!) asleep sound as possible in the armchair, although my heart smites me to talk of sleeping, since I fell asleep in the most curious way last night over my books, and slept ever so long, and I had not done anything particular in the day time either. I only succeeded at last in waking myself up by reading some of Rogers' 'Pleasures of Memory'; and here is a beautiful simile I have hopped on; something to say poetry, though no disrespect either to your poeticulisings or mine. Speaking of memory he says:—

> What softened views thy magic glance reveals!
> When o'er the landscape Time's meek twilight steals!
> As when in ocean sinks the orb of day
> Long o'er the wave reflected lustres play;
> Thy tempered gleams of happiness resigned,
> Glance o'er the darkened mirror of the mind."

Mr. Bagehot, keenly interested in politics, carefully watched the Free-Trade movement from its beginning, and writes:—

"*8th May*, 1841.

"Sir Robert Peel's name reminds me of the political (and more especially as connected with politics) the commercial and financial crisis to which we have arrived. Lord John Russell gave notice a week since that the Government had come to a united determination to recommend a revision of our com-

mercial code, with a view of adopting a course free from prohibitary duties in order that our revenue (which now not equal to our expenditure) may be increased, by the increased consumption of taxed articles, to be rendered cheap by the plans proposed, and that commerce and manufactures being freed from monopolies may revive and extend—and the Corn Laws, Sugar Duties, and Timber Duties, the three great hindrances to a liberal course, are to be immediately brought under discussion. Indeed the sugar duties were to be the subject of debate last night. I expect the ministry will be defeated by the all-powerful interests who are opposed to them, and they will no doubt dissolve Parliament on the question that the consumers who are to be benefited, may give them support enough if they can. I fear they may, and will be unable to carry, even after an election, their enlightened views, but I rejoice that the time is come for beginning an agitation on this, the most important subject of the time, and as we have the many on our side, and the truth, as I firmly believe also, I will not fear that with time we shall want success."

"BRISTOL,
"16*th May*, 1841.

"MY DEAREST PAPA,

"I have just received your long and most interesting letter, and hasten to answer it. The interest on the important question now before the House of Commons has even reached us boys, who are certainly no politicians generally. Mr. Booth stoutly defends the existing Corn Laws, and of course opposes the Ministry most virulently. Somerton, Smith, and myself have had some discussions with him, and though, of course, he had the best of the argument, he having studied the question which we had not, we were by no means convinced. There is, too, at the College, a boy, or rather youth—for he is nineteen—of the name of Pile, the son of a West India planter, who feels very strongly against the sugar bills, very reasonably, I think, as it will materially lessen his father's property, which is extensive. It has been quite a joke against Pile to uphold the sugar bill, as he gets very angry, or in College phrase 'brittle'.

He has enough of the planter in him, too, not to give the abolition of slavery unqualified approbation; though he owns it to be a desirable measure, he says: 'Generally it has not worked well; it has increased begging in a good degree,' etc., and always winds up with saying that 'the twenty millions we paid them was by no means an equivalent to the planters for slave labour'."

In answer Mr. Bagehot writes :—

"22nd *May*, 1841.

"I daresay the excitement of the political world, although it had reached the college, does not interfere with or disturb you much; perhaps to be out of the way of a daily newspaper is no bad thing just now for those who have occupations which require their best attention.

"The Ministers, you no doubt know, were beaten on the Sugar Duties by thirty-six, and have given notice that they now mean to take a Debate and Division on the Corn Laws, before they appeal to the Country.

"The election will probably be a very exciting one in large towns, especially in the manufacturing districts, and altogether the crisis is a serious one. I am not sorry that it is come, for without this, and perhaps others still more serious, the House of Commons, and above all the House of Lords will not willingly vote a reduction of rents. I do not know what may be the turn which things may take in Bristol, but be careful, my dear, to have nothing to do with it, beyond the quiet expression of your feelings and opinions. Partisanship should be carefully avoided by all who have not had time or experience for forming a sound judgment, for, if otherwise, we are often bound by class to opinions which, if fairly examined, would be acknowledged to be full of prejudice; but which cannot be so tested for fear of disrepute in deserting your party. What makes Mr. Booth (Master of the College) a Corn-Law advocate? I hope he has an old rich Uncle with many fine acres, all of which are to be his!"

Mrs. Bagehot was at this time with her brother in London. She writes :—

"Sloane Street,
"20*th May*, 1841.

"Well! my Beloved, I went to the ancient concert and had a most delightful evening in sight and sound. We were close to the Directors' box and the only disappointment I had was (for the Queen, we knew, was not to be there) that we were behind the Duke of Wellington, and that he never turned round, and alas! looks quite, quite old and tottery—and decrepit. I still hope the mind beams on, but the body is certainly going the way of all flesh. I wanted to see his front face and the expression of his eye, but that I could not do. In the box were the Duke of Cambridge, his daughter the Princess Augusta—not handsome even now in her bloom, the beautiful Lady Wilton, Lord and Lady Burghesh, Lord Howe and his sister Lady Susa, Lady Augusta Somerset and some other ladies that we did not know. Lord Ellenborough and various other stars glittering about—and latish in the evening there was a little bustle, and in came the star of stars with his suite, Prince Albert, who is very, very handsome, and talked and chatted with all around in a very affable manner."

Before the Christmas holidays in 1841, Walter writes:—

"In addition to the work I told you of before, I have to write an 'Essay on the comparative advantages of the Study of Ancient and Modern Languages'. Not a very promising subject I am afraid, but I will do my best. It is quite voluntary doing it, and I should not wonder if I were the only one who does it; however, the practice in composition is what I look to."

During the Christmas holidays, 1841-42, Walter writes to his friend Fry the following:—

(*Undated*)
(*Postmark* 1842.)

"Dear Fry,

"What could induce you to think I wanted Barker's Latin Dictionary; if you will accept the brute, I can only say you are most welcome to it.

"Your doubt about the old question is easily answered;

there is nothing to prevent the principle of Young's solution answering: if you pare while the weight is suspended, it will break at the point at which you begin; if you take the body away, while you pare, Professor Young's solution remains in statu quo. By the bye, I have written to Young, to thank him for his prompt attention to our question. My governor said it was the respectable thing to do. Could you send me Young's letter, as my governor wishes to see it; it shall be returned promptly. Have you commenced working yet? I am over head and ears in Plato's *Apology of Socrates*, and Bourdon's *Application de L'Algebre a la Geometrie.* The French reminds me to ask how Chalon is (Heaven only knows how to spell the name); if he is convalescent, remember me to him, and if you like, you need not say it was from me, tell him to wash his hands. I have heard from Moline; he had not received my letter, and when he wrote that (6th January, 1842) had not received a word from England. He writes in good spirits and says he likes his work pretty well, when it is not standing up in water. He could not stand in very deep water, that's certain. Is Booth gone to Dublin? Compliments to your brother, if your Quaker principles do not proscribe that usage of society.

"Believe me (I had a mind to put *respected friend* but I shan't),

"Yours &c. &c. &c,

"WALTER BAGEHOT.

"I hope you can decipher this scrawl."

Sir Edward Fry writes:—

"Whilst Bagehot and I were pupils at Dr. Booth's School, we discussed certain problems of a physical character. One which interested us much we stated in the following terms:—

"'Suppose a spherical or cylindrical body suspended by a rigid and unextensible thread or bar in a vacuum, and friction (if any) being left out and that the bar increased in strength as it approached the top in proportion to the increase of the bar below, or, which of course is exactly the same thing, that the thread or bar possessed strength but not weight, and

suppose the weight of the spherical or cylindrical body was such as necessarily to break the bar or thread: where would it break and wherefore?' We were unable to solve the problem and agreed to write to two eminent mathematicians, one of whom was Professor Young of Belfast, and who replied to Bagehot as follows:—

"'BELFAST,
"'27*th May*, 1842.

"'SIR,

"'The rod in your question will yield to the weight straining it at its place of junction therewith. The *reason* is that *time* is occupied in communicating the stress from the lower to the upper section of the rod. As by hypothesis the weight *must* break the rod, the break will take place where the full effect of the weight is first felt, viz. at the bottom; the weight when thus detached can therefore carry with it a mere lamina of the rod.

"'I am, Sir,
"'Your obedient servant,
"'T. R. YOUNG.'"

On returning to College after the Christmas holidays for his last half year, he writes:—

"BRISTOL,
"6*th February*, 1842.

"I was rather dismal at first, particularly when I found I was to be in a class by myself; and that I should not have much companionship or association with other boys. I am beginning to get steadily to work, which is a comfort, and has made me much less dismal."

After Parliament met, Mr. Bagehot writes:—

"21*st February*, 1842.

"In the evening after I finished my last letter to you, I read Lord Palmerston's speech to your mother. The whole of it was most effective, but one part of it was so eloquent that I cannot help making an extract of it for you. A great

deal, you know, has been said by the advocates of the Corn Law about our being independent of a foreign supply of so important an article as our food, which Lord Palmerston contends is a complete fallacy, as we depend on foreign commerce for a market for so great a portion of our manufactures ; if we will not buy, we cannot sell, and our artisans and manufacturing population may be starving for want of wages to buy food, however abundant may be our home grown supply. He then adds : 'But, sir, there are large grounds on which this doctrine ought to be repudiated by this house. Why is the earth on which we live divided into zones and climates? Why, I ask, do different countries yield *different productions* to people experiencing *similar wants?* Why are they intersected with mighty rivers—the natural highways of nations? Why are lands the most distant from each other brought almost into contact by that very ocean which seems to divide them? Why, sir, it is that man may be dependent upon man. It is that the exchange of commodities may be accompanied by the extension and diffusion of knowledge—by the interchange of mutual benefits, engendering mutual kind feelings—multiplying and confirming friendly relations. It is that commerce may freely go forth, leading civilisation with one hand, and peace with the other, to render mankind happier, wiser, better. Sir, this is the dispensation of Providence, this is the decree of that power which created and disposed the universe ; but in the face of it, with arrogant presumptuous folly, the dealers in restrictive duties fly, fettering the inborn energies of man, and setting up their miserable legislation instead of the great standing laws of nature.'"

It was during these years when at Bristol that Bagehot formed one of the few intimate friendships of his life. This was with one of Dr. Prichard's sons. Of him he writes to his father :—

"*7th April*, 1842.

"Constantine Prichard is at home. I was much struck by his beautiful forehead and brow, so very intellectual and expressive ; certes he is by far the best looking of the Prichards ; only time can show whether he is the cleverest.

"I am writing from Clevedon, as indeed appears from the date.[1] It is indeed a pretty place, and there are some spots which even a Lynmouth person might think beautiful, although it is of course more cultivated, and has in consequence not that beautiful and picturesque wildness which we used to admire in, 'your garden'. I went last evening to a pretty little bay (though not to be for a moment compared to Ringclip), where the tide really came in very prettily. It was very calm, scarcely 'a breath the blue waves to curl,' only alack! there is precious little blueness, and mud is not a *necessary* ingredient in sentiment. There is a universal petition that you would come up here, I think. You would like the inland scenery very much indeed; do you not think you could manage it for a day or two, just a glimpse? Our dear friends are kindly pressing me to come down next Saturday, if you could come up! I walked over a most beautiful hill yesterday, and scrambled up another, and saw a most lovely view on one side, most beautiful inland scenery, rich and cultivated, and on the other, the sea and rocky hill, between which, and the one I was standing there was a most beautiful wooded vale, 'looking serenity' as Shelley has it—I *did* so wish for you!"

There is a pathetic ring in the last letter Mr. Bagehot wrote to Walter when at Bristol College. His bird is now fledged and about to fly away from the nest into a wider sphere of intellectual attainments than that which his father can reach.

"Herd's Hill, 11*th December*, 1842.
"*Sunday Morning.*

"The education required in the present day must be laid on a wide foundation, and ample time given for raising the structure. A tree and its roots and branches is a better figure. The roots must be deep and firm if the trunk is to grow high and its branches spread widely, and all its parts must grow together. A man's character must be gradually forming religiously, morally, and intellectually, which cannot be done, I

[1] This visit was the first Walter paid to Clevedon, which was destined to be the place where he and my sister lived for three years after their marriage.

think, but through the influence of time and the circumstances which accompany it. If one part of the character be forced too much, it will generally be at the expense of some strength in another, and I often think that we may trace some of the faults of young and old collegians to the too exclusive pursuits of collegiate honours. In saying this, however, I know you will think that I under-rate the exertions that must and ought to be made by them. Temperance is all I wish to inculcate and a wide view of the blessings of education founded in wisdom and virtue. Every day do I feel how much I have lost in not having had such an education as I wish to give you, and you need not therefore fear that anything will be wanting on my part to secure to you its advantages. I do not repine although I feel that there is a world beyond my ken, and that that world of knowledge and usefulness may bring with it more happiness than can be mine. But thankfulness and not mere contentment is the deep sentiment of my heart for the blessings of my lot, and as I have education enough for the immediate duties of my station, and for growing wiser and better for that world where light and truth and peace reign now and for ever, I must be more anxious to make a right use of the talent I have, than disappointed that it is not larger."

To his intimacy with Dr. Prichard, whose researches in Ethnology early attracted Walter Bagehot's attention, can be traced the awakening of a class of ideas which were developed in Bagehot's mature writings. His fellow-creatures, and all that it is possible to find out about them, were ever subjects of great interest to him. Dr. Prichard's researches had dug deep, and he could throw light on many hitherto obscure questions concerning the *Physical History of Mankind*, the title of his best-known work. There was much science going on at Bristol in those days, the days when Dr. Carpenter, Dr. Prichard, Dr. John Addington Symonds, and Mr. Estlin lived there, and formed a learned social centre. Indeed in those days the whole atmosphere of the social world of Clifton seemed steeped in the culture of science.

Walter Bagehot, when out of college, lived continually in the midst of this circle of scientific magnates. Throughout the

years of his life of thought, and this life of independent thought began when he was a very small boy, his mind collected with eager interest every species of sound knowledge, and used it as the raw material, the groundwork for his own original ideas to work upon. When at Bristol he was too much occupied with his college work actually to study the subjects in which his learned connections were such adepts, but he seized with avidity any information gathered through the conversations he heard at their houses. In a letter to his mother he writes :— "I dined at the Prichards a day or two ago. The Doctor had two friends there talking about the Arrow-headed character and the monuments of Peutapolis, and the way of manufacturing cloth in the South Seas."

From a boy Bagehot showed one unmistakable mark of a sound understanding. He intuitively recognised ideas, thoughts, and feelings which are in conformity with actual facts, and the facts which underlie and promote all progress in knowledge and civilisation ; likewise he distinguished, equally intuitively, the worthlessness of all shams and counterfeits of such ideas, thoughts, and feelings. As a child he knew what was sense and what was nonsense, what was humbug and what was not, without going through any process for finding out which was which. The knowledge he gleaned from the learning and researches of Dr. Prichard was food which he found nourishing, and it proved fruitful later when he worked in his own channels of thought. [1]

[1] An interesting account of Dr. Prichard's distinguished life and attainments is contained in the pamphlet written after his death by his friend, John Addington Symonds, M.D., a distinguished physician, and father of the well-known author : "Some account of the life, writings, and character of the late James Cowles Prichard, M.D., F.R.S., M.R.I.A., Corresponding Member of the National Institute in France, etc., etc. (being the substance of a Memoir read at the Meeting of the Bath and Bristol Branch of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, in March, 1849), by John Addington Symonds, M.D., Consulting Physician to the Bristol General Hospital, 1849." Dr. Prichard was born at Ross in Herefordshire, in 1786. As a boy he was remembered by his companions for his love of fun. He was a linguist from early days, and enjoyed, when he went to Bristol, talking to the foreign sailors who came to the port, in their own languages. "Once he accosted a

Dr. Prichard was, moreover, according to Dr. Addington Symonds, "a *Christian* Philosopher; no one knew him intimately without being aware of the strong influence which piety maintained over his mind, and how it actuated his conduct". The influence, therefore, which his special subjects exercised on Walter Bagehot's line of thought, was, as regarded religion, entirely in harmony with his home teaching. Mr. Bagehot fully appreciated the value of Walter's intimate relations with Dr. Prichard and his family. He writes on 22nd February, 1840: "I was glad to hear of your intellectual employment at the Red Lodge (Dr. Prichard's house at Clifton), and hope you will avail yourself of every opportunity of acquiring the habits and tastes that pervade the house. I know enough of the pleasure they afford to regret that I have formed so few of them."

Dr. Addington Symonds writes "that fancy and imagination were not prominent faculties in Dr. Prichard. He was never at a loss for a suitable illustration to enrich his style which was affluent as well as terse and vigorous. Yet there was not that conscious enjoyment in the pursuit of analogies and likenesses which belong to men in whom the faculties I have adverted to are strongly marked, and correspondently with this, I think that he had no decided æsthetical tendency, no such sensibility to the beautiful as would lead him to dwell on

Greek sailor in Romaic, and the man was so delighted, that he caught the boy linguist in his arms, and kissed him heartily!" He studied in Edinburgh, Cambridge, and Oxford, and received nearly every honour accorded to science in Germany and in France no less than at home. The work through which Dr. Prichard's name is best known, *Researches into the Physical History of Mankind*, was published in three editions, in the years, 1813, 1826, and 1847. Each was a greatly amplified edition on the last. Other works, "with which," says Dr. Addington Symonds, "his name will be ever associated were on 'Nervous Diseases' and 'Insanity'; *The Natural History of Man*, *Egyptian Mythology*, written chiefly to disprove Professor Murray's opinion that the Egyptian people were peculiar to themselves and to Africa; *The Eastern Origin of the Celtic Nations*, and *The Review of the Doctrine of a Vital Principle*, in which there is 'a very masterly disposal of Dr. Priestley's well-known argument; *viz.*, that the phenomena of mind and those of matter belong to the same substance'."

the enjoyments of poetry and the fine arts; though he was too much of a scholar, and in every way too well informed not to be able to converse on these subjects."

Precisely the quality—imagination—which Dr. Addington Symonds denies to Dr. Prichard, Walter Bagehot possessed to a very uncommon degree. Since the days when, as a small boy, he flew about the lawns of Herd's Hill with his sword, ruthlessly slashing off the heads of the flowers, exclaiming, "And he cut off the heads of the Saracens by hundreds of thousands," imagination was ever a salient characteristic in Walter Bagehot. Take almost any page of his book, *Physics and Politics*, and you can trace with what effect his imagination dealt with, and recast into modern trains of thought, the knowledge and research of scientific authorities. Dr. Prichard and other explorers dug out of the dim past, and exposed to light, actual facts concerning the history of human races, stopping short, nevertheless, of inspiring any impulse to use the past in order to elucidate the present. Walter Bagehot emancipates the principles evolved through such research from the storehouses of learning, and gives them renewed vitality by turning them on to modern conditions and modern developments, applying them especially to the subjects which were his own pursuit. The grasp which imagination alone can give of the substance and evidence of things not seen, was clearly the power which gave Walter Bagehot a very distinct position in the world of modern thought, and gave also his individuality the peculiar influence it possessed over his fellow-men.

CHAPTER V.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.

OXFORD and Cambridge were debarred owing to Mr. Bagehot objecting on principle to all doctrinal tests which were then required of the undergraduates at the older Universities. Mitigating the chance of dangers and temptations in London was the house of the guardian angels, "Aunt and Uncle Reynolds" at Hampstead, which was to be treated as a second home. University College, London, afforded the best schooling for youths whose fathers objected to doctrinal tests. A certain Dr. Hoppus, a Unitarian, had a house for pupils studying there, and it was decided that to University College Walter Bagehot should go, and that he should live with Dr. Hoppus at 39 Camden Street, Camden Town, where father and son presented themselves in the beginning of October, 1842.

"I must confess," he writes to his mother after a few days' residence there, "to having felt rather dismal, when Papa left me at the University in the midst of a thick London fog; and I cannot say but I felt rather dismal occasionally since, when I think of Herd's Hill and you all sitting quietly and happily down amid all its beauties, while I am toiling here in the midst of dust and smoke. More especially I prefer the evenings at home, with Papa reading aloud Sir Samuel Romilly, to those we have here, although I have managed by dint of hard work to get through them pleasantly enough."

About a month after he had been at College, Bagehot met with his first real trouble.

"CAMDEN TOWN,
"*30th October*, 1842.

"MY DEAREST PAPA,

"I sit down in great perplexity of mind to write to you; I do not know whether the course of conduct I am now

taking, will appear to you right or not, but I can only say that it has not been taken without the most anxious consideration. I hope I am doing right, certainly I am not doing what is pleasing to me; and I feel it is to be my duty to take a step before the distance between us will allow me to consult you, which would have been the greatest comfort to me." He then describes a state of things highly reprehensible which had been going on in secret in the house of Dr. Hoppus, and which he had suspected for some time, "although," he writes, "I have tried to disbelieve it as long as I could". When he was fully convinced of the wrong conduct of two of his fellow-students which involved lies and deception, "I feel," he writes, "that it cannot be my duty to allow this state of things to continue; I do not think it would be doing right either to Dr. Hoppus or to —— himself; yet the office of tale bearer is so invidious and in general so contemptible that I confess I am exceeding loath to undertake it." He then explains why immediate action is necessary, and continues, "What makes it still more painful to me is that —— (mentioning the chief culprit) has so much good feeling and is altogether so pleasing, that I like what I have seen of him, except in this unfortunate affair, I have expressed my abhorrence of it to him, when I only suspected it. I am now going to seek a conversation with Dr. H.; I need not tell you how much anxiety this has cost me, or how much I dislike the duty I am going to perform, but my resolution has not been taken without the most careful deliberation, and I may add earnest prayer. It will give me much comfort to hear from you."

Later—"The conversation is now over. Dr. H. was much shocked, and seems inclined to sift the matter to the bottom: further indeed than I had supposed, as he intends, if he finds my information correct, to send —— away immediately. For this, I shall, in some respects be sorry, although I cannot but think it essential to ——'s welfare that he should be immediately removed from London. I cannot say more, as it is more than time for me to go to college, and I have a racking headache, caused, I think, in great part by my not having slept well for the last night or two, scarcely at all last night, which was

spent in resolving and doubting on the step I have now taken. I need not say how much good it will do me, to know that you think I have done right. Dr. H. assured me that he was greatly obliged to me for stating it to him, which makes me hope that I have done so."

Mr. Bagehot writes in answer a letter of sympathy and approval.

"Many, many thanks for the kind sympathy of your note," Bagehot answered. "Many difficulties have arisen out of this most painful affair. . . . The step I have taken has, of course, made my companions exceedingly angry, and for this I was prepared. They do not, however, break forth into any abuse, nor have any painful scenes of a quarrelsome nature occurred; on the contrary, they do not speak to me 'either good or bad'. This perhaps is the very best course for all parties which they could have pursued. ——'s father is coming here to-day, and Dr. Hoppus informed me that he should probably wish me to repeat in his presence what I stated to him. The scene to-day will probably be an exceedingly painful one——. Friday morning. The painful scene of last night is over; it was trying to all of us: ——'s father seemed at first inclined to be very angry, but after talking with Dr. Hoppus for some time, he became much calmer."

The result of this action of Walter Bagehot's was that Dr. Hoppus sent both culprits away. "It is my first taste of the troubles of life," Bagehot wrote. "Henceforth I shall perhaps never be wholly free from them, and although overcoming one may render the others more easy, I felt the other day with some beautiful lines of Wordsworth:—

> Yet why repine we, created as we are for joy and rest,
> To find them only, in the bosom of eternal things.

"I must say good-bye as I am scribbling, when I ought to be reading Mr. De Morgan on 'the square roots of unity!'"

In the beginning of the next term Bagehot writes to his father: "I went to breakfast with Smith Osler, this morning, and on his offering to perform his promise of proposing me in the Debating Society, I told him frankly that I thought my

being able to get in exceedingly doubtful, and on his inquiring told him the reason. He said that if I would put him in possession of the circumstances of the affair, he would try to get me elected."

In a letter written at the time of Walter Bagehot's death Mr. Smith Osler says: "The first thing I knew about him when he was not long emerged from boyhood was an act of great moral courage".[1]

Walter Bagehot seldom had other than friendly relations with those with whom he came in contact, but his real friends were few. Three of his fellow-students at University College were among these few.

The lasting friendship he formed there with Richard Hutton proved to be one of the important events in his life. Both were sixteen years of age when they first met. There was little similarity in their natures, but a mutual affection sprung up from the first days of their meeting, no less than a strong sympathy in intellectual and spiritual aims. They were bound also by the tie, perhaps the strongest, most lasting tie that can bind the friendship of two men. They lived and worked closely together in the springtime of their mental energies, in the years when wide portals were opening to splendid avenues of intellectual activity. In his memoir Mr. Hutton describes what they were to each other when receiving "the shock of mighty thoughts—with a pure natural joy". No two students were ever fired with a purer enthusiasm in starting on that voyage of all voyages the most momentous in life, that of exploring the vast fields of knowledge accumulated in the past, and of seeking through such knowledge what this world of ours ought to mean to us—whither its teaching ought to lead. They enjoyed together higher ranges of thought and feeling than could be inspired by intellectual studies alone. To apply Bagehot's own words, each possessed the "intense and glowing mind—the vision and faculty divine". Soon also this friendship with Mr. Hutton enriched his life on the side of sentiment. Intellectually Mr. Hutton was at that time at

[1] See Chapter "Tributes from Contemporaries".

least Walter Bagehot's equal, but the character of Mr. Hutton's devotion for his friend was one of dependence rather than of equality. Originality of thought and a striking imagination were Bagehot's special characteristics; they were not Mr. Hutton's. Very many letters exist filling large pages with minute handwriting, written one to the other, exhaustive ponderings on philosophical, moral, and religious problems, evincing mutual interest, sympathy, and affection. But this correspondence makes it evident that, though both were equally independent in their views, Walter Bagehot's nature dominated over Mr. Hutton's as being the more robust and confident. Mr. Hutton's nature leaned somewhat towards an over-scrupulous, over-exacting conscientiousness. He would ever doubt his own conclusions, he was ever his own most severe critic.

In a letter to his father deprecating his nature as wanting the definite unscrutable mark of genius, the late Lord Lytton writes: "There can be no doubt about real genius. It is sure of the world, and the world sure of it." The difference between the manner in which Mr. Hutton's and Walter Bagehot's minds worked was shown in the fact that any moral or intellectual light came as a flash of truth to Bagehot with this certainty of genius; whereas with Mr. Hutton, who had no less a powerful intellect, truths would work themselves out through thought and conscience. Throughout his life his conscience was extraordinarily sensitive and exacting. Walter's influence on him was bracing, invigorating, joy-giving; the influence to which he owed, perhaps more than to any other, the power of moving on in life, and of advancing to firmer standpoints. One humorous sally from Walter, one conclusive witty criticism, would clear the air for him, he felt, better than days of solitary pondering and dissection. Mr. Hutton had an ample sense of humour wherewith to enjoy any joke against himself, and to feel his mind the crisper for it. In personal intercourse it was most often through the medium of humour that Walter's advice was administered. Mr. Hutton accused his own mind of being ponderous and wanting in elasticity, and felt that it was the buoyant elasticity in Walter Bagehot that helped him so

greatly. With affections feminine almost in their tenderness and tenacity, his intellect was remarkable for an insight which, through its uncompromising, crude directness, made his conclusions appear at times almost brutal. Whereas no fault he ever discovered in a friend could make the strength of his affection waver for a moment, his critical acumen made him severity itself when his disapproval was aroused towards faults in others which jarred on his moral sense. He displayed no satisfaction in exercising the severe side of his critical faculties; but no arguments could ever modify his condemnations. You might plead for extenuating circumstances for any length of time—all the same at the end Mr. Hutton would repeat the words with which he had begun the discussion, "But you must admit he (or she) is *dreadful!*" The moral disgust he felt for certain defects was incurable, and so instinctive and conclusive was this abhorrence that he did not trouble to give any reasons to justify it, though it appeared strangely opposed to the very Christian spirit which was characteristic of his nature generally. This uncompromising attitude gave his character a quaintness which amused Walter Bagehot, who, when with Mr. Hutton, would assume a cynically tolerant view towards most of the weaknesses of human nature. Mr. Hutton's earnest devotions and his equally earnest disapprobations made a delightful playground for Walter's humour and statire.

In letters which he wrote from Heidelberg in 1846, Mr. Hutton expressed the feeling of dependence with which he clung to Walter Bagehot:—

"HEIDELBERG,
"30*th August*, 1846.

". . . Of one thing I am certain that your mind will not feel the want of our daily discussions and conversations on subjects so deeply interesting to both of us nearly so much as mine. I have always thought it one of the most happy circumstances of my life that at college I was thrown with a mind so well calculated, not only to afford intellectual sympathy, but intellectual guidance, for to that has your

influence on my opinions quite amounted. I have always found myself arrived at the same stage of opinion and progress that you have passed sometime, but through which I am following you, and have always felt that any beneficial influence I may have had upon you can only be in compelling you to re-traverse and re-consider old ground, while your influence on me has been that of one well able to strike out new paths for himself, on one who requires as an intellectual necessity, the aid of some more original thinker. This *inter alia* made me so anxious to carry you with me into the new region of German thought where I feel sure without you that I shall be a hopeless wanderer unable to discern the tracks of law."

Later he writes : " You do not know how pleased I was to see your letter yesterday. The promptness of your reply is, I fear, but a slight induction on which to ground any augury for the future ; but if it continues it will be some consolation or rather substitute (however slight) for our conversations. Your description of my state of mind 'you know and believe, while I speculate and doubt,' would have been much more accurate had you omitted the verb of knowledge. That I do believe long before I have the data for knowing, is indeed a peculiarity and no enviable one of my mind, one which is apt to lead me to take up creeds first, and find arguments with which to defend them afterwards, the essential peculiarity of an unphilosophical mind."

This attitude of dependence on Walter Bagehot's friendship was not in Mr. Hutton a mere ebullition of youthful enthusiasm. When writing to my sister on 1st October, 1877, referring to the memoir of Walter Bagehot he had just completed, he says : " The feeling that so much of the best part of my literary interests had vanished with him made me feel that in finishing this my career was closed. It is hard to put so much of life behind one ".

In the same autumn, in sending my sister this article for the *Fortnightly*, Mr. Hutton wrote : " I came across this sonnet which I wrote in 1847 to Bagehot, I fancied you might like to see it. Though I don't think it's good at all (it is very

young), it shows you, as nothing else could, the strong feeling he excited ".

"To W. B.

"*Written at the foot of the Marlinswand, near Inspruck*, 1847.

"Dearest companion of my life and thought,
How often in thy spirit's nobler power
My weaker soul has aid and comfort sought
In converse with thee at this twilight hour—

"Deep in the solemn mysteries of life,
Sad in the shade by darkest problems cast
Thy faith has triumphed in the mental strife
And light has beamed upon my soul at last.

"And now while here beneath the awful shade
Cast by this barren mountain's rugged face,
I watch the sullen shadow slowly fade
As star by star shines out upon its base,
It seems as though that giant form were doubt;
Thy thoughts the stars that cast its horrors out."

The other two intimate friendships which started from the University College days were with William Caldwell Roscoe, grandson of the historian of the times of Lorenzo de Medici and Leo X.,[1] and with Timothy Smith Osler. Both were senior to him by a few years. The organising of a new Debating Society, of which Mr. Hutton, Walter, and Mr. Roscoe were the chief promoters, first brought them into close contact. "We have been getting up a new Society to supersede the old one," Walter writes to his father, "Roscoe, Hutton, and myself are the chief prime movers. We have had one meeting to organise the Society, in which *I* was in the chair. Roscoe was unexpectedly prevented from attending the meeting and Hutton fought shy of the honour, which accounts for my elevation. I am to be replied to on Capital Punishments by a Mr. Stowell, whom I don't know personally, but who is reckoned a crack speaker. My motion was very reasonable as

[1] Mr. Roscoe was also a first cousin to the Right Hon. Sir Henry E. Roscoe whose eightieth birthday was notably commemorated on 7th January, 1913.

Richard Holt Hutton

there was a lack of subjects at first starting, De Morgan just beginning."

A strenuous life of intellectual effort shared together was the bond which commenced the friendship between Walter Bagehot, Richard Hutton, and William Roscoe, but beyond this bond, interests of a character deeper than those purely intellectual were shared by the three friends. Literature was to all three more than a mere intellectual enjoyment. In choice books they found a stimulus which nourished feeling as well as mind. They had early learnt the art of reading the best things in the best way. Also, they had early caught vivid impressions from the aspects of nature, and through intimate companionship with Wordsworth and the poets who discern in nature meanings which arouse a sense of the spiritual life, they had awoken to the twofold joy felt by inter-weaving the delights of the eye with throbbing aspirations of the soul.

After Walter Bagehot's death Mr. Hutton wrote in a letter to my sister—"You remember that sonnet of Wordsworth's Bagehot was so fond of, beginning—

> Surprised with joy, impatient as the wind
> I turned to share my rapture—oh ! with whom ?

"It often comes back upon me now when I have something I want to talk to him about, and I remember I shall never hear his step coming up my stairs again."

Beyond this again was a still firmer ground of union. A sense of the reality of the spiritual life was ever present in their lives. The parents of each were Unitarians, with the exception of Mrs. Bagehot. Walter Bagehot was never a Unitarian. Referring to those College days Mr. Hutton writes, "On theology, as on all other subjects, Bagehot was at this time more conservative than myself, he sharing his Mother's orthodoxy, and I, at that time, accepting heartily the Unitarianism of my own people. Theology was, however, I think, the only subject on which, in later life, we, to some degree at least, exchanged places though he never at any time, however doubtful he may have become on some of the cardinal issues of historical Christianity, accepted the Unitarian position." Many of the ideas which Walter Bagehot threshed out

in conversation and in letters in those student days, are recalled in his Essays on Bishop Butler written in 1854, and on *The Ignorance of Man* written in 1862. The moral aspect of religion was ever prominent in the discussions between these friends; but what is perhaps the most salient mark in their attitude towards religion as suggested in their writings and letters, is the scrupulous conscientiousness with which they weighed and sifted all the influences affecting their belief, taking nothing for granted but the one all-important fact, namely, the reality of the spiritual life. Walter Bagehot writes in his Essay on Bishop Butler: "In every step of religious argument we require the assumption, the belief, the faith, if the word is better, in an absolutely *perfect* Being; in and by Whom we are, who is omnipotent as well as most holy; who moves on the face of the whole world, and ruleth all things by the word of His power. If we grant this, the difficulty of the opposition between what is here called the natural and the supernatural religion is removed; and without granting it, that difficulty is perhaps insuperable. It follows from the very idea and definition of an infinitely perfect Being, that He is within us as well as without us—ruling the clouds of the air and the fishes of the sea, as well as the fears and thoughts of men; smiling through the smile of nature as well as warning with the pain of conscience—'sine qualitate, bonum; sine quantitate, magnum; sine indigentia, creatorem; sine situ, praesidentem; sine habitu, omnia continentem; sine loco, ubique totum; sine tempore, sempiternum; sine ulla suit mutatione, mutabilia facientem, nihilque patientem'. If we assume this, life is simple; without this, all is dark."

In a letter to my sister written shortly before their marriage, Walter writes:—

"Herd's Hill,
"4*th January*, 1858.

"I assure you I still like to talk theology very much when I am started, but I am lazy—and quiescent in all intellectual conversation. I like talking and do talk a great deal somehow, still I require a stimulus—a *nudge* in my elegant native

dialect—from without, or I do not begin. I am afraid, however, you give me credit for more digested and elaborated ideas on the subject than I really have. The faith of young men is rather tentative. Some points, of course, are very fixed, but a good many are wavering—are rather tendencies than conclusions. I have perhaps an unusual degree of this myself. From my father and mother being of different—I am afraid I might say—opposite sentiments on many points, I was never taught any scheme of doctrine as an absolute certainty in the way most people are. What I have made out is a great deal my own doing, and naturally it seems to require testing more than an hereditary belief would. I have always had an individual feeling that my inner life has been too harsh and vacant to give me an abiding hold of some parts of religion. At any rate, the outline wants deepening and the colours softening—you never know the intellectual consequences of a new moral experience. It is a new premiss and may combine with any one of your previous results. Women arrive more easily at their conclusions on these subjects because their spiritual experience is gentler and more continuous—less of a seizure, in fact. They are therefore often puzzled at the way men go to and fro, apparently settling a conclusion to-day and unsettling it to-morrow, and think it is aimless wandering and nothing is being gained. But it is not so. A new spiritual consciousness naturally recalls the mind to consideration, and if sometimes it brings us back to old opinions, and teaches us that our last opinions are not so well founded as we thought them, yet the 'old' opinion is really a new one because based on and cleared up by a new spirit—perhaps from God, and it is necessary for thinking men at each stage to think out the data they have, although they know that data may change to-morrow. If they did not do so, they would not know how to appreciate each change or be sure of its effects—the mind would become confusion. 'On a sudden' I have become metaphysical, I fear."

Mr. Hutton's published writings suffice to show what were his ultimate beliefs—and the haven to which he reached after

passing through many perplexities and phases of doubt and speculation which were discussed in these early days. He writes of William Roscoe: "His religious faith was, indeed, rather the deepest of his personal relations than a field either for moral or intellectual questionings to his mind".

Mr. T. Smith Osler was a distant cousin of Walter Bagehot's. A pedigree of the Osler family shows that a Priscilla Osler, his great-grandfather's sister, married a Thomas Bagehot, and her niece, Christian Poole, married another Thomas Bagehot. Walter knew Smith Osler before entering University College, but did not study there together as Mr. Osler was his senior by some years. Later, when Mr. Osler was practising as a barrister and Walter was reading for the Bar, they appear to have seen much of each other.[1] Mr. Osler expressed with such forcible truth in the paragraph quoted by Mr. Hutton in his Memoir of Walter Bagehot, what many people felt about his talk, that it may be well to repeat it here: "As an instrument for arriving at truth, I never knew anything like a talk with Bagehot. It had just the quality which the farmers desiderated in the claret of which they complained that though it was very nice, it brought them 'no forrader'; for Bagehot's conversation did get you forward, and at a most amazing pace. Several ingredients went to this; the foremost was his power of getting to the heart of a subject, taking you miles beyond your starting point in a sentence, generally by dint of sinking to a deeper stratum. The next was his instantaneous appreciation of the bearing of everything you yourself said making talk with him, as Roscoe once remarked, 'like riding a horse with a perfect mouth'. But most unique of all was his power of keeping up animation without combat. I never knew a power of discussion, of co-operative investigation of truth, to approach to it. It was all stimulus, and yet no contest." No words that have ever been written about Walter Bagehot recall better than these the peculiar *entrainement* and charm of his talk, and the stimulus which his genius gave to it. Ideas seem to spring

[1] Mr. Osler married a Miss Roscoe, a sister of Mr. Hutton's second wife and a cousin of his first wife.

forward recklessly with a great leap—but always to alight on just the right, convincing spot.

Much had Walter Bagehot, Richard Hutton and William Roscoe in common, but one of Walter Bagehot's striking characteristics these two friends did not share. In his essay on Macaulay we find the delightful description of the nature of the Cavalier. In reading it we feel Walter Bagehot could not have written it had there not been a strain of the Cavalier in his own blood—a recurrence probably in his veins of his royalist ancestors, the Bagehots of Prestbury, that had filtered down to him through his more immediate Puritan grandfather and great-grandfather. He was a strange mixture of the Royalist and the Puritan, though he seemed to have realised the true nature of things more profoundly than do the minds of those who are typical examples of any isolated class or creed. Having inimitably pictured the Cavalier, he writes: "It might be thought, at first sight, that the insensibility and coldness which are unfavourable to the appreciation of the Cavalier, would be particularly favourable to that of the Puritan". Quoting the *éloge* M. de Montalembert pronounced on the French historian, Droz, which wound up by the sentence —"*he was hardened at once against good and evil*," Walter Bagehot proceeds, in one of the most stirring passages he ever wrote,[1] to prove that this is not so. The limitations which blind a cold nature to the virtues in the Cavalier equally blind it to the spiritual passion of the Puritan. Deep underlying the surface of his intellect, Walter Bagehot possessed very consciously what he writes of as "the intense, peculiar, simple impulses which constitute the heart of man; the eager essence, the primitive desiring being". This he felt to be the real moving power in human life, far and away more potent than any mere brain effort can be. "Try a little pleasure," he advises as the best way of communicating and establishing the creed of Conservatism. How well he himself knew the inebriating effect of high spirits, the power they are, and how much of the world succumbs to that power. His was a nature

[1] See chapter 16.

stirred by beauty on the surface no less than by the beauty beneath. He could be thrilled by a deep spirit of human enjoyment, he could be alive as a child to the simple outward charm of the world—equally touched by the visible and the invisible—and it was at times with a wild reckless Cavalier spirit that he tasted this "deep spirit of human enjoyment".

Neither Mr. Hutton nor Mr. Roscoe had, it may be presumed, anything of the *Cavalier* in their nature. Their love of the visible was of a Wordsworthian character and certainly nothing in Wordsworth suggests the *Cavalier*. Unitarian principles may preclude making for pleasure on principle. Nevertheless I believe it was the "Cavalier" in Walter Bagehot which in great measure was the magnet wherewith he drew his serious-minded friends so closely to him. The rollicking element was very refreshing when felt to be but an offshoot of a passionately religious nature, of a delightful character, of a sound understanding, and of a personal refinement quite remarkable. If his friends could not rollick themselves, they could be fascinated by rollicking in such a companion. What won for Walter Bagehot the position he is said to have held—namely that of a "sort of demi god" among his fellow students at the University College—was doubtless this finishing stroke of charm, the overflowing joy and strength of "the primitive, desiring being," united with the power of running over a course of hard study with brilliant success.

Bagehot was consistently pessimistic as to his chances of success in passing examinations. He collapsed the day before the event—he came out with flying colours on the day itself.

On 10th July, 1843, he writes:—

"My dearest Mamma,

"I have just come back from Somerset House, and beg leave to inform you that, in spite of all croaking and forebodings, I am actually past and in the *first-class*. Also that I have been further recommended to go in for honours both in Classics and Mathematics. We had no business to hear this till to-morrow, but Hutton and myself with some others, by dint of bothering officials, got admitted to Dr. Jerrard's

august presence. He was kind indeed, I think affectionate is the only proper word, and especially congratulated Hutton and myself on our 'distinguished success' hitherto! He said that he strongly recommended us to go in for Classics, and said that though he could not personally give any opinion on Mathematics, he assured us that the Mathematical examiners spoke very highly of us. "It is rather an awful circumstance that out of 80 who passed only four had the courage to put their names down, namely Hutton, two King's College men and myself. One of the King's College men was faint-hearted at the important moment, and gave it up, so that we are only *three* candidates. I think I shall probably—almost certainly—be the last on the list if I get on it at all."

On 17th July, he writes:—

"I have chosen not to go in for classical honours and this is the case. After writing that note to Papa on Saturday I determined on a last trial to see how I should get on. But after an hour's work I got thoroughly exhausted and went to sleep over my books, and when I awoke, really felt as if I had not two ideas—and this decided me. I had persevered all day against a pain in my shoulder, and a slight difficulty in breathing, which are by no means incentives to hard study. It would have been useless to go on without learning a whole book of Thucydides, which in the interval there would have been just time for—and but *just*—in my usual state, and not time sufficient in my present state."

On the same day from Somerset House, he writes:—

"A change has come o'er the spirit of my dream as will be observed from the date of my letter. I got remarkably better last evening, and have ventured on trying on a forlorn hope. I don't expect to get placed at all, as I have had no preparation or cramming whatever. There are seven of us trying." The result of the forlorn hope is conveyed from Herd's Hill to his Aunt Reynolds.

"*26th July*, 1843.

"MY DEAR AUNT,

"Being in a state of very great excitement, much in the way of epistolary correspondence is not to be expected.

The result for which you will be kind to turn over is most amazing. After all the pros and cons I had no right to expect anything of the kind and did not. The result in Classics :—

Barry (Exhibitioner), King's.
O'Reilly, St. Cuthbert's, Ushaw.
Equal { W. Bagehot, University College / R. H. Hutton, University College } Equal.
Hodgson Pratt, University.

These were the only five mentioned. I could scarcely believe my own eyes when I found myself equal to Hutton. I think you have heard me speak of him, and if you have, you will know that I consider being equal to him no slight honour. I believe that my English essay was the cause of a good deal of my success. Dr. Jerrard told Hutton that his essay and Mr. Barry's and mine were by far the best, and mine was the best of all. The subject was the character of Socrates, and the influence of his teaching, and we had to do it without reference to books, and without cramming, as the subject was only made known when we entered the examination room."

The state of Walter Bagehot's health at this time caused anxiety to his parents and it was settled that he should not return to University College till the New Year, 1844, thus missing the autumn term. A horse, "the grey" mentioned in his letters, was acquired, and, much to his enjoyment, he rode and hunted it during the five months he was at home.

Mr. Hutton wrote to him :—

"NOTTINGHAM,
"13*th September*, 1843.

"I am indeed sorry to hear of your cough as the cause of your only attending three classes, but I think it a very prudent measure and rejoice to hear that it is going off; be sure to mention it in your next letter and tell me whether you have ever taken laudanum since I forbade it. With respect to your remarks on Cobden, I partly agree with you; I think that he has *not* devoted his time very much to the study of any part of politics but political economy; but still from allusions to

other points which I have read in his speeches, from his voting with a small minority so consistently in favour of all the liberal motions, from seeing his name amongst the supporters of Mr. Roebuck's motion 'that in all public schools supported by the state secular education only should be given and the religious left to the wish of the children's parents,' from seeing his name in all the divisions against the Irish arms bill, and from his support of Mr. Christie's motion in favour of the admission of Dissenters to Cambridge, and last, but not least, his support of Mr. Sharman Cranford in his motion for an extension of suffrage to the people, I should say that he would be likely to extend to all other subjects that enlightened and liberal spirit which he is now showing in his patriotic (in the true use of the word) exertions to root out monopoly from this country. My objections to Lord John Russell are numerous but chiefly these, that I think him a man who votes against Sir R. Peel more for the sake of opposing the Tories than for the sake of promoting liberal principles, and it is this which is the cause of our never seeing his name in conjunction with the Tory party, even when the measures which they propose are really good. Then, too, he seconds Lord Palmerston in his *hateful war policy*, and I think Lord Palmerston is one who has done more harm in the Government by his war policy than Lord John Russell would ever be able to do good by his half and half measures. But you will be tired of my political talk, and I will mention Roebuck another time. I am now a teetotaller as far as total abstinence without taking the pledge goes. I think you are also one, are you not? Send me word if you have taken the pledge. I think I shall return home in a few days, so please to direct to me next at 5 Hamilton Place, King's Cross. Do not you pity me for being at home again, in beautiful London, so soon? But I must conclude this prosy epistle and will conclude as thou didst, by begging that you will write soon to your affectionate friend,

"R. H. HUTTON."

On 9th January, 1844, Walter Bagehot returned to University College. Two important events mark this year. Mr.

Hutton and he attended the meetings of the Anti-Corn Law League and for the first time heard O'Connell speak, which Walter considered a very "remarkable event": and, consequent on the anxiety respecting his health, he made his first journey on the Continent. Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds arranged a tour for the autumn vacation, and Bagehot besides other friends were asked to accompany them.

Though forcing himself to do extra work for the examinations had told injuriously on Bagehot, as a rule intellectual effort seemed to have acted as a tonic. Work was enticing to him—he seems to have felt a keen sense of satisfaction in using the powers of his fertile, elastic brain. He greatly enjoyed his mathematical studies though they were among the stiffest.

". . . De Morgan," he writes, "has been taking us through a perfect labyrinth lately; he was quite lost by the whole class for one lecture, but we are, I hope, getting better, and more gleg at the uptake. We have been discussing the properties of infinite series, which are very perplexing—one is harassed by getting a glimpse of theorems and then to find that they are to be taken with so many limitations, that one has still greater difficulty in seeing them at all. My father will understand the difficulty, when he is asked to see how $-1 = 1 + 2 + 4 + 16 + 32 \ldots$ to an infinite number of terms."

"39 Camden Street,
"*27th January*, 1844.

"My dearest Father,

"I took a holiday on Thursday evening to go to the Anti-Corn League in Covent Garden Theatre. It is reckoned to have been a very good meeting though neither of the usual great guns, Cobden and Bright, were there. Mr. Fox however was a host in himself. Parts of his speech were very fine, and made very impressive by a peculiar but striking manner, and a deep and well modulated voice, and he made the most of the opportunity of going out of the beaten track of Corn Law speeches, afforded him by its being Burns' birthday. He said 'nature made him a poet, and aristocratic protection made him an exciseman'—a very effective parenthesis

in his declamation against protection in general. Many passages in his speech were in very bad taste, and though they were those that told best in the pit, they certainly marred its effect on the more cultivated part of his audience. His invective is very stinging and he has the art to make passages, that are really, I have no question, very elaborately and carefully prepared, seem as if they were struck off the moment without the slightest effort. He had not a single note, and never left a sentence unfinished or went back to begin one again through the whole speech, which lasted a full hour. The other speakers were Bouverie (I am quite sure that everybody who heard him could not blame the Salisbury electors), a Dr. Burnet and Mr. Milner Gibson. The last spoke next best to Fox (though there was a great difference between them), and very like a gentleman, in which respect he was unrivalled. The great want in all their harangues was argument, which cannot be mended by any quantity of wit or declamation. One is always tempted to ask, as the landlady did Falstaff, 'What, not a halfpenny-worth of bread to all that sack,' and in treating of a great practical question, and one which as they are themselves striving to show, requires immediate decision, sound and comprehensive reasoning would seem the most essential requisite, though it is not the one most readily found. Such eloquence as Francis Horner's is what one wants, dealing with the existing question with great precision, but at the same time and by the help of well-grounded and enlarged principles. I have just been galloping over a volume of his life with some of his speeches at the end, which Mr. Reynolds kindly lent me, and which has been an agreeable diversion at times, though I could have wished to have given it more fixed attention as it is well worthy of being studied. He quotes in one place a striking thought from Leibnitz: 'There are secrets in the art of thinking, as in all other arts,' and surely seeing accurately how such minds as his were trained to excellence, is not bad education in the art of reflection, and more likely to initiate one into its mysteries, than almost any other. At anyrate it is very pleasant to see great minds in their leisure moments, and when they are off the stage; but it certainly

does not place genius one whit more within the reach of those who have not it by nature, nor, properly received, does it lessen their greatness, though it lets us into the secret of many faults, which one would not otherwise know of."

"*Wednesday, 27th September.*

"There are but two events to characterise this day; the first is of a negative character, that I have not had a letter, but the second is that I have been to a Repeal meeting, and have heard O'Connell—a very remarkable event, to describe which I ought to invoke the aid of every god in the Pantheon, and every saint in the calendar. In sober prose it was a great treat. I never heard any eloquence at all to be compared with O'Connell's. The meeting lasted from two to five, and more than two-thirds of the time was occupied by his speech, or rather speeches, for there were several, as he spoke on every subject which came before the meeting, and these were many. The business commenced by the secretary reading some letters from various branch societies, some of them wordy, which were applauded in proportion to the amount of rant they enclosed. One of these was from the Southern States of America, in which slavery still exists, and which in alluding to some expressions of O'Connell on the subject of Negro slavery, called the god of justice to witness that in opposing 'Emancipation,' they were actuated by no motive save a regard to the highest ultimate interests of mankind. All this the meeting heard in perfect silence, until O'Connell rose, and observed that he was perfectly indifferent to the terms of reproach in which the writer of that letter chose to mention him, but he would not allow the cause of Irish Freedom to be sullied by an alliance so unhallowed. He was quite willing to hear; nay! he gloried in the name of fanatic (this was one of the epithets in the letter) if to be a fanatic was to love, and honour the cause of freedom, however it might be opposed by distinctions of man's erecting, whether they were of sect, party, or colour. The invocation to the god of justice seemed to him something like blasphemy. It amounted to imputing to the Ruler of Nations, distinctions between one man and his fellow,

founded on the bodily difference of colour, which the most enlightened of his creatures had agreed to disregard. I can't pretend to give his words, and even if I could, I could not give you any idea of the voice in which they were uttered. Its higher tones are very dignified and impressive, and the lower ones very sweet, and are heard distinctly in every part of the room. There was much, too, on a proposition made by a Mr. Connor, that no Rent should be paid by the Repealers; O'Connell quite hinted that he was an emissary of the Tory Government, and desired to be informed, whether it would not have been but justice to himself, if Mr. Connor had waited until his return before he made a proposition so important, being in truth nothing less than treason. Thence he branched off into a discussion of the present state of the connection between landlord and tenant, and advocated very strongly a plan of which the main feature was to take away from the landlord the right of immediate eviction on the non-payment of rent, and thus to put him on the same footing with other creditors. The second part of his plan was to prohibit by act of parliament leases for any time shorter than twenty-one years, and to give by this means to the tenant a firmer assurance that he would enjoy the fruits of his industry. The audience consisted principally of the Irish not remarkable for the goodness of their garments, and more good-tempered than genteel. At each proposition made by the 'Liberator,' there was an impressive *aye*. It was a very tumultuous 'aye' when he proposed that Mr. Connor's name should be effaced from the list of their members. The room was hung round with inscriptions of which these are specimens: 'A people strong enough to be a nation should never consent to be a province'; a better one is: 'Whoever commits a crime, strengthens the hands of our enemies'."

Later Bagehot writes: "I was at the Anti-Corn Law League meeting at Covent Garden Theatre on Wednesday evening and witnessed their enthusiastic reception of O'Connell. It was a very imposing sight to see the whole house crammed full as it was in every corner, pit, stage boxes, and galleries, rise at once at his entrance, and remain standing for more than

ten minutes, cheering him the whole time, some waving hats and pocket handkerchiefs, and very many shouting welcome. What made it still more striking was that the crowd outside, which must, from the loudness of their shouts, have been very large, began to cheer several times under the mistaken impression that he was coming, and the audience inside rose each time and cheered, to the very great annoyance of Mr. James Wilson. O'Connell's speech was witty enough, and he continued to express more by the tone of his voice than by anything which he said, the gratitude which he felt for their sympathy when he most wanted it. No man was ever under more disadvantageous circumstances for making a fine speech, as his audience would hardly let him say ten words consecutively without interrupting him by their applause. Certain it is that he was very quiet, nor did he venture on anything half so violent as I have heard Mr. Fox say in the same place, who wound up a long invective against the aristocracy, and the great Pro-Corn Law League, as he calls the House of Lords, with saying that 'he would hurl defiance in their teeth'. The number of people who went away without being admitted was immense, as they posted on the walls of the neighbouring streets in less than half an hour after the doors were opened, that there was no more room. I was on the front of the crowd on the stage, and I could not see a vacant place in the boxes, galleries, or the pit, and we were so crowded that after a great deal of rolling backwards and forwards we carried the platform by storm, very much I have no doubt to the annoyance of those who had tickets for that part of the house and who, relying on the sacredness of the place, came late and found their places occupied. I had to stand the whole evening, but as I heard very well and was very near all the 'dons,' I had no reason to complain. It will give you some idea of the enthusiasm that is felt for him in London, when I tell you that they began to issue tickets at half-past twelve on Monday and that at a quarter before one they had none left in the outer office, and numbers of people were going away without them. Hutton and myself, however, by dint of very great exertions, and contempt of the repeated refusals of all inferior satellites,

made our way to the head committee room and by dint of eloquence obtained a ticket apiece there. I don't know whether you have not reason to complain of all this description, but I was very full of it for a day or two, as it was a scene quite new to me, and write now to let off the steam. I must add that I had hardly ever so distinct a notion of the greatness of London, as when I came out, and saw how little interest all this great assemblage seemed to excite three streets off, and how little effect it had on either the numbers or direction of the throng of passengers."

On 1st March, Bagehot writes to his mother:—

"I can communicate no intelligence on any matters of fact whatever, except that I went a few evenings ago to hear a chartist lecturer on the present state of the country. His name is Vincent. He is a clever and eloquent man, and by no means wholly in error as to his views of political matters. He is very opposed to the use of physical force, and is half his time talking about Christian principles. I have been reading some more of Carlyle's French Revolution which I think I told you I had begun. His political opinions are very strange. In fact, I think he utterly disbelieves in the usefulness of any institutions. For Hereditary Monarchy and Hereditary Aristocracy he has a thorough contempt. Representative assemblies he commonly calls National Debating Clubs, the right of suffrage, the power to send the $\frac{1}{5000}$ part of a dumb voice to the central spouting club. Political science is a hard subject, but this rejection of all the common expedients for governing a community strikes one as strange. He, I think, is for a Natural Aristocracy as he calls it. He thinks that it would be an advantage if the highest minds in every generation were engaged in the actual direction of the state power. But I cannot see why the highest intellects should not be employed rather in communicating new truth to mankind, or labouring to illustrate known truth and to instruct the mass of the population in old and valuable knowledge. This is, I think, a far higher way of influencing the happiness of the world, than the application of physical force to protect men's lives and properties. It is a not unfrequent source of error in

such reasonings to confound the influence exercised by the finest minds over their fellow-men by persuasion and conviction with the Government by laws and Acts of Parliament. The two things seem very distinct, but I could quote from writers of very high reputation instances of their being confounded. As far as I understand Dr. Arnold's theory that Government ought to be sovereign over human life, it seems grounded on nothing else but the assumption that the Government by argument and the Government by force must necessarily be the same. We had a debate on a subject very like this a few days ago in our Debating Society. The question was 'whether Government ought to interfere with the dissemination of basphemous or seditious publications'. I took the negative. The debate was spirited. More like a real description of actual business than I ever knew in a society for the purpose of speaking. Everybody seemed to feel the question to be one of interest and importance. If you or my father are interested about it, I will send you my speech in a day or two. Mr. De Morgan has lately had an amusing feud with one of his lower classes. Some students would come late, and the professor, to keep them out, locked the door, which has made him rather unpopular. It is not so bad as last year, however, when he told the same class with much bitterness, that they were robbing their parents and insulting him! The rest of the students thought of asking him to take the Chair of Rhetoric in consequence."

Subject discussed at the Debating Society, University College, February, 1844 (address by Walter Bagehot alluded to in preceding letter), "Whether Government ought to interfere with the dissemination of blasphemous or seditious publications".

"MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,

"As no other gentleman seems to wish to address the society, I will endeavour to set before you as clearly as I can what I deem the true view of this interesting question. Before enquiring what Government ought to do, we must *answer* the preliminary question, 'What *can* Government do?' We must

ask 'What means has a Government as a Government of influencing the minds of its subjects in matters of opinion?' The answer is plain, I think; laws as laws neither convince nor persuade but threaten; they address neither the intellect nor the conscience, but fear and the will. An Act of Parliament presents with a catalogue of actions, and states that those who do them shall pay certain stated penalties! Nor does it appear that laws can do anything more than this. They *might* indeed reward certain courses of conduct, although they have in general failed in the attempt. But then it would be only physical rewards which would come within their province. It is so obvious, that were it not very important for the present argument I should not state it that no law can promise the mental pleasures, arising from the acquisition of the truth nor from the peace of a satisfied conscience. Now if these facts are so, what means has Government for influencing the convictions of its subjects? Let it threaten and bribe as much as it may, a man's belief is not influenced by such means. Motives addressed to the Will may and do direct the conduct, but arguments addressed to the understanding alone determine conviction and opinion. It seems very clear then that over belief in Government as Government is utterly powerless. And if this be granted, the room for dispute is very much narrowed. For it can be the duty of *no one*, be he ruler or subject, to influence profession without influencing conviction. I need not, I suppose, go through the forms of a proof for so fundamental a theorem in morality. No one will deny that it is every man's duty to say what he believes to be true. Can it then be the duty of any other to make him swerve from so clear a duty? Are rulers *ex officio* to be tempters? This argument is somewhat abstract, but if it be sound, and I believe that it contains no flaw, it justifies the conclusion, that Government being unable to guide the minds of its subjects to what opinions it deems true, must not presume to meddle with their professions. But, say the advocates of restriction, are not men's moral feelings to be protected? Is *blasphemy* to be publicly allowed? Is a practice so shocking to go unpunished? I answer that it is already punished. If the moral feelings of mankind are, as

the objection implies, insulted, most assuredly there will be moral indignation against the offender. If any persons wish this increased, let them employ with all their vigour, the resources of Christianity and natural religion, moral science and any other co-operating forces which they can discover, to develop the natural indignation of the human heart against the degradation of what is noble and the profanation of what is sacred. Let them not with such weapons at their command, think to add anything worth placing in comparison with them by the legal infliction of physical suffering. Beside this, I cannot help pointing out a notable inconsistency in those who advocate the laws of this country in relation to blasphemy. Written blasphemy is punished, spoken blasphemy is allowed to go untouched. Where is the use of a complicated machinery to protect the eyes, when the ears are offended in every street at every hour? It was also well observed by the replier that no one knows what blasphemy is. That no exact definition can be given of it adapted for legal scrutiny. Is it wholly absurd when *invincible* obstacles are found in applying a principle to practice, to suspect that there is a lurking unsoundness in the principle itself?

"I come now to the case of seditious publications. The opener made many observations as to the excellence of the general principle of the freedom of the press. In fact, his whole speech was only an able development of the triplet which T. Moore in the Fudge Family puts into the mouth of a court lawyer,

> From my soul I love and bless
> The sacred freedom of the press
> My only aim's to crush the *writers*.

"It appears to me that there is a very simple dilemma to which those who maintain the expediency of curbing the license of the press may be easily reduced. If the existing Government is the best for the people, all assaults on it by means of paper exhortations to rebellion will assuredly be easily encountered. If there be one fact about man's nature proved by an extensive induction it is this: that nations are

much more likely to suffer too long the tyranny of a bad Government, than be unwilling to acquiesce in the rule of a good one. But if on the other hand the existing social organisation be injurious to the nation, seditious publications are doing good service in inciting the nation to reform it or change it. In fact, to a wise Government seditious publications afford an important assistance by showing what grievances are really weighing heavy on the community. The value of such involuntary aid and the impolicy of renouncing it, have been eloquently expressed by Mr. Macaulay, who cannot see that the danger is to be measured not by discontent which comes *out* of the public mind but by that which stays *in;* is there anything more terrible than the situation of a Government which rules without apprehension over a people of hypocrites—which is flattered by the press and cursed in the inner chambers;—which prides itself on the affection and attachment of its subjects and knows not that those subjects are leagued together against it by a freemasonry of hatred, the sign of which is every day conveyed, in the glance of 10,000 eyes and the pressure of 10,000 hands. Profound and ingenious policy, not to cure the disease but to remove the only symptoms by which it can be certainly known; to leave the serpent his sting and take from him his warning rattle.

"If the rules of debate permitted it, I should have liked to put a question to the opener. There exist in this country a sect of persons who deny that the use of physical force in cases of resistance is at all justifiable, who are logically consistent enough to deny the lawfulness of all Government as it now exists. What would the opener do with these persons? On his principles they ought to be severely punished. Nothing can be more seditious, for they distinctly avow that *all* laws ought in their judgments to be abolished, and further that they pay the state taxes only as they would give their money to a highwayman. Yet I think the moral feelings of all would revolt at inflicting suffering on peaceable persons, all of whom are perfectly unoffending, and one of whom at least has a mind of no common order. Yet surely if those

are not to be punished who would abolish all Government, with what consistency are those to suffer who only desire the abolition of some particular constitution?

"Again, is a writer on Government in theory to leave a blank filled with asterisks for the constitution of his own country? or are we to adopt the test proposed many years ago for Mr. Windham, 'That what was not treason in quarto and folio was treason in *duo decimo?*' and as to irreligious books, are we to say with a counsel on a recent trial, 'That dear blasphemy was to be exempted, but that cheap blasphemy was to be rigidly punished'! All such opinions carry to my mind their own falsehood written in very legible characters. Nor shall I weary you with discussing them at length.

"If it were said, as it might be, that the interference of the state was not to restrict the dissemination of any opinion as such, but only the improper method of propagating opinions, my answer is, that if this were so, Government ought to interfere with the improper ways of maintaining *all* opinions. At least, nothing can be more one-sided than that Government should interfere with one side of a controversy to preserve proper decorum, and let the other be as abusive and slanderous as it pleases. This is no imaginary state of things. Even Christianity itself has often been defended in a manner for which all true Christians must deeply grieve. If the state were to interfere at all, it ought, I think, to be to make the advocates of what is holy confine themselves to weapons that are pure. There are few, I suppose, who would not rather see calumny and fraud used *against* the truth than *for* the truth. But it is always thus. The law steps in only to assure to the advocates of received opinions a monopoly of slander, and to put a differential duty on truth that comes from obnoxious quarters. Far different was the spirit of Milton. Two hundred years ago he said in arguing this very subject: 'Seeing no man who hath tasted learning, but will confess the many ways of profiting by those who, not contented with state recipes, are able to manage and set forth new positions to the world, and if they were but as dust and ashes under

our feet, so long as in that notion they may yet serve to polish and brighten the armory of truth, even for that respect they were not utterly to be cast away'. The advocates of suppression would do well to consider the fact that the works of Shelley (the poet of all others upon whom the mantle of Milton appears in the last generation to have descended) cannot be legally published in this country. We are not yet entitled to despise the licensers who wished to mutilate *Paradise Lost*.

"This subject is almost endless. Because I clearly see, that it is impossible that Government should ever interfere with the indecorous expression of all opinions; because I see that the effect of all legislative interference in controversies has ever been to make an approximation to candour compulsory on one side but to encourage on the other side violence, calumny, and bigotry; because the instances are unnumbered in which this power has been abused and that there is every probability that so long as the power exists it will continue to be unemployed; because many of the writings that would be suppressed by legal penalties have an important part to play in the removal of social encumbrances; because no one knows what blasphemy is nor what sedition is, but all know that they are vague words which can be fitted to any meaning that shall please the ruling powers; I should deem it demonstrated from these considerations of expediency that all restriction is unwise, and all suppression impolitic. But still more, because I cannot avoid perceiving that Acts of Parliament neither by penalties nor rewards can influence a conviction that is regulated by arguments and arguments alone; and that all attempts to guide the expression of opinions, without first directing the belief, are so many incitements to insincerity and hypocrisy, I consider myself justified in asserting that these laws are not only inexpedient but unjust, and above all especially inconsistent with a religion whose glorious office it is to reduce to their minimum the coarse influences of force and fear, and to raise to their maximum the nobler powers of truth and virtue."

"39 Camden Street,
"18*th March*, 1844.

"My dearest Father,

"I shall begin with observing that the literary taste of the family is, I fear, at a low ebb. I yesterday received a note from my mother (I have received none from anyone to-day) in which she enjoined on me not to say anything about the meeting at Covent Garden the other evening on the insulting ground of you being able to see it in the papers. Now it is too bad to have one's powers of description put on a level with a newspaper reporter's! It is degrading to have it thought that one has no better eyes and ears for whatever passes than a man who is the whole time scribbling shorthand! ! ! ! In spite of all injunctions the meeting was so curious, that I shall expend a word or two on it. The 'Friends of Ireland,' as the advertisement set forth, would appear to be Irish, or at least Celtic for Repealers, of whom the meeting was for by far the most part composed, and of which the speakers all expressed themselves advocates. Certainly if good coats and clean linen were taken as the best tokens of the strength or weakness of a political party, the Repealers would be weak indeed, for as Dickens somewhere says, the greater part of them seemed to have quarrelled with their washerwomen in earlier youth and to have taken a fixed resolution never to make it up. Two striking peculiarities in the assembly were the unaccountable disposition of the people in the dress circle to go down into the pit, and their striking familiarity with the Irish accent and the Irish howl. Nevertheless the chairman, a heavy man in a white waistcoat, called the meeting 'most respectable'. O'Connell's speech will be in the papers for certain, so that I must not lay hands on it, and indeed, excepting its strong Repeal character, there was very little about it remarkable. He spoke with his hat on, and seemed quite at home, though he was looking, I thought, wan and haggard."

In this session Bagehot began studying etymology with Mr. Key. "My head," he writes, "is now full enough of queer etymologies, and examples of all manner or changes of all manner of letters. It is not easy to recollect at a moment's

notice a number of words in many languages, yet it is necessary to compare the different forms, and thence to rise to more general laws. The subject is yet in its infancy, for the science is not thirty years old, and this adds much to its difficulty. There is no connected system as yet to help the memory. I will write more fully on Monday which I believe is a holiday."

On 26th May Bagehot writes to his mother:—

"I had no doubt of your liking Dr. Arnold. I never knew or heard of anyone who did not like him very much, except the editor of the *Record*. A writer in that paper in a Review of Dr. Arnold's life said it was a book to do more harm than good!!! If your pleasure in the book makes you sceptical as to this intelligence, I am sorry, and I should hardly have believed it of a 'religious' periodical, if I had not *seen* the words myself in its columns. They were so angry as to what he said as to the narrow-mindedness of the Evangelicals, and their neglect of the cultivation of the *intellect*, that they were utterly unable to separate what they thought unjust in his censure from their general impression of his character. There are contemporaries of Arnold superior to him, I think, in quickness of imagination, and subtlety of discrimination and vigour in the reasoning power, but there would be few claimants to a superiority over him in moral energy and *un*fanatic zeal. My father seems in doubt if he would have approved of the Dis-establishment Bill. I have no doubt that he would have done so. He says in his life, that the Irish Church ought to be a Catholic Church in three-fifths of Ireland at least. His system would have come to the French plan of paying the preachers of every scheme of *Christian* doctrine. He would also have compelled those who are not Christians to support some form of Christianity. I do not apprehend that he saw any particular advantage, moreover, in the contributions of individuals passing through the hands of the tax gatherer, and would therefore have been satisfied with making each man pay not less than a given sum to the support of *some* form of Christian worship. But this is too moderate a theory of Church establishments to be much in favour with their usual supporters. Bigots for the voluntary principle (among whom I fancy that I ought to in-

clude myself) may doubt whether coercion by legislative enactment is even to this extent a fit way of spreading the influence of religion. I am not, however, going to write an appendix to this letter on Church establishments."

In his Essay, "The Ignorance of Man," Walter Bagehot writes: "The higher part of human belief is based upon certain developable instincts, not the most important but the most obvious of these, is the instinct of beauty". This instinct is "an obvious unmistakable instinct which does produce effectual belief though sceptics explain to us that it should not". This instinct of beauty Walter Bagehot possessed in an uncommon degree. Beauty in Nature, beauty in Art aroused in him fervid feeling. From childhood the beauty of his own county and of Devonshire inspired in him a sort of enchantment. In the Bristol College days he describes his delight in the scenery about Clifton and Clevedon, and when at the age of eighteen he reaches the Rhine, Switzerland, and the Alps, a passionate rapture seizes him. Works of art he saw in Belgium arouse in him likewise profound enthusiasm. Walter Bagehot's rapture may be taken as an expression of very genuine enthusiasm. He would have found little fun in echoing orthodox admiration. Objects themselves had to arouse it, unaided by any second-hand authority however notable.

During his travels he kept a copious journal for the benefit of his parents from which the following are fragments. It begins 24th July, 1844:—

BRUGES.

"*26th July.*—A day of sightseeing which begins at six in the morning and ends at nine at night, gives one much to set down, but leaves little time or inclination for doing so. . . . We went to the hospital of the Sisters of Charity, whom we saw in full costume, and it was considered pleasing to see them go round to the sick people in the wards, and give them *gebäckte* meat. I have no notion of that kind of pleasure. It is pleasing no doubt to know that from a sentiment of piety towards Him who is higher than the highest, these women go through a laborious course of trial to be allowed to wait on the meanest of His creatures, but watching them in the lowest part of their functions is not the way to have the most favour-

able ideas of them. Cutting roast beef, and putting it into plates with the fingers is no doubt a very useful operation, but I should prefer the general notion that a person went about doing good, to knowing that they did this, and seeing them about it. . . . I have left myself little room to speak of what I consider much the most beautiful object I have seen on the continent. I mean, a statue supposed to be by Michael Angelo in the Cathedral of Notre Dame of the Virgin and Jesus. The delicacy of the figures, the infantine simplicity of Jesus, and the motherly anxiety of Mary who is looking down at him as he sits on her lap give a grace to the whole group too impressive to be forgotten, but which I can't put into words. . . ."

From Bruges the party went to Antwerp. "The Cathedral at Antwerp is the most delicate Gothic building in the world according to the guide-book, which also states that Napoleon compared it to Mechlin lace, and Charles 5th said it ought to be kept in a case. At Ghent we saw a beautiful likeness in wood of Charles 5th of the most spirited kind on a celebrated chimney piece in the Palais de Justice. Whoever wants to get an admiration of Rubens let him come to Antwerp. It has thoroughly converted my Aunt Reynolds who is not in most cases, as the family know, a convertible person. The descent from the cross, of which you have the print in the drawing room, is beautiful as far as colouring is concerned. The body stands out from the canvas which is the more remarkable as being on a white ground. The raising the cross is also fine. None of the paintings by Rubens in the National Gallery, and none that I have ever before seen, give any idea of his full strength. A minute examination will often discover defects in the details of his pictures, and one or two of his faces want expression when one would have imagined he would have put forth all his powers, but for striking and instantaneous effect, I have never seen his equal, and I cannot imagine anything that in this respect would be an improvement on him."

After describing five great pictures in the Antwerp Museum Bagehot says: "The last painting which I should wish particularly to recall is a painting of Jesus dead and on the knees of Mary with the Magdalene and the other Mary standing beside

her. Mary Magdalene has in a paroxysm of sorrow lifted the hand of Jesus, and is weeping over it. To contrast this with the deep and settled grief of Mary without tears or passion was a noble conception. The tears of the Magdalene and the other Mary are flowing over their countenances, and in the latter it is only a single tear which is beautifully executed. To convey in language a good idea of this picture, and that of the crucifixion by Rubens would require no small share of those powers required for the effort of producing them. The imagination ought to have recourse to every source for the most expressive images of sorrow and suffering, and a yet higher flight in search of illustrations for the suffering and despair of the impenitent thief. The best tribute I can give to them is a statement of the fact that after the rest of the party were gone to look at some Antwerp silk—which, by the way, they lost their way and didn't see—and after throwing all attempts at criticism aside I tried to enter into the conception of the painter, the tears came too fast to my eyes to let me look any longer. I didn't state this publicly for it might look like affectation, yet why it should, I can't see. They are few who would be ashamed of weeping over Lear or Othello, and to come more exactly to the point I am convinced that fewer still would read the narratives in the Gospels, especially St. Luke's, if they were not so familiar, without much emotion. In spite of the number of times we have all read them, those who read them in private with attention will find it hard not to pay the same tribute to their deep knowledge of the human heart."

". . . When at Mechlin we afterwards saw another church whose name I have forgotten, in which we saw the picture by Rubens of the Scourging of Jesus, of which we have the print at home. We saw here a priest preaching in Dutch. The meaning was lost on us, though the sound at a distance had an effect remarkably like English. I believe it is less guttural than German to which it is nearly allied, which would make the elementary sounds very much the same as in English, and account for the resemblance I have mentioned, which was felt by all our party. The audience were mostly of the lower class, and the manner of the preacher seemed calculated to attract

their attention and did so. All who can read the sermons of Bossuet will not have to learn that eloquence of the highest order is at the command of the Roman hierarchy. Yet it is singular that the art which has for its object the setting forth in attractive and enduring colours and labours of the human mind should be at the service of a system, which sets out with denying the right of private judgment in matters of religion—that is the right of exercising the highest of its powers on the noblest of subjects."

From Brussels Bagehot writes to his father: "An English gentleman who had resided some months at Mechlin and whom we met in the railroad described the authority of the Roman Catholic priests in that city as so great that a shopkeeper who should offend them would within a week find his shop deserted. If this be not literally true, the clergy must have great power, if a person who had good opportunities of information, and appeared to be an intelligent man, could entertain such an opinion of them.

"This uniformity is what many persons in our country are sighing for, but the best description of it is Lord Bacon's,—that all colours are alike in the dark. Ignorance is the surest means of attaining it. While walking amid the lofty arches of Antwerp Cathedral I could not be otherwise than astonished at the skill with which architecture, and all the fine arts are pressed into the service of Catholicism."

From Aix-la-Chapelle Bagehot wrote: "Mr. Reynolds and myself in enquiring about the English service met with a queer character, who seems to act as leading churchwarden. He talked theology at a great pace, but professed never to have heard of the evangelical party, or anything at all contrary to the Church of England being one and indissoluble! He commenced a full detail of the churchwarden's employments in the midst of which we came away. He proved satisfactorily that every subject of conversation could be brought round to a churchwarden's business."

Of Cologne he writes: "The streets are gloomy and dirty and narrow, but these are nothing here. Whoever would learn the full strength of the human imagination, the loftiness

of human hopes, and the littleness of their fulfilment, let him look on the Cathedral of Cologne. When the original architect drew that plan of the original structure which still exists, and is deemed the finest conception of the Gothic school, he must have felt some swelling pride at leaving behind him a name connected with a structure so magnificent, and some nobler anticipations of the glory his labours would bring to Germany, and of their stimulating effect on the genius of future ages. His name has been lost, and grass has long grown on the unfinished towers that only show what the whole would have been. It is not commonplace declaration to dwell for a moment on so complete a wreck of such aspiring hopes. The Cathedral was begun in A.D. 1248 and received additions till 1509, when the work was stopped, till in 1824 the King of Prussia gave money for continuing the work on its original scale. The choir is now finished, and the rest of the work going on fast, though at the rate of 100,000 dollars a year, the work would last fifty years. The height of the work is well seen from the bridge of boats over the Rhine where the unfinished towers, and also the lower portions are seen far above every other building. The effect of the whole by moonlight, from time to time obscured by heavy masses of dark cloud, with a reflection of the lights on shore in the 'wide and winding river' might, I should think, bear no very distant approach to the celebrated sight of Venice by night from a gondola. I am too much aroused by the beauties of what I have just seen, to be a very fit former of comparisons between it and what I really know—much more than with what I have never seen. They show the skulls of the Magi (or five Kings of Cologne) in the Cathedral and some antiques, but they are too little to be seen or remembered as being there; anywhere else they might have a better chance, but,—I will not break forth again!"

"*8th August.*—Still at Nonnenwerth where we mean to linger another day. A place of pure enjoyment of natural scenery is not good for a journal though a happy one to live through. In the morning we ascended Rolandseck—the scene of Schiller's 'Knight of Toggenberg,' and in the afternoon we

scaled the Drachenfels. The beauty of catching the same landscape in different points of view is very striking at the time, but can only be very generally stated on paper. The obvious points of the scene are on the right bank of the Seven Mountains of which the Drachenfels is the most striking, especially when by twilight it is dimly seen lowering over the river. The hills have generally a peaked appearance which is said to mark their volcanic origin. On the left bank is the hill of Rolandseck with a broken arch of the ruin on the top, which is in exact keeping with the fragments of a tower and wall left standing on Drachenfels. These ruins of feudal strongholds bring to one's imagination the times when these scenes were valued for other qualities than their beauty. Cultivation has covered all their country with green—except these relics. Barbarism has left these stranded wrecks to make us remember that there was a time when her dark waters covered the earth. The windings of the broad river, with island and the old nunnery upon it, complete the meagre outline of the picture."

"NONNENWERTH, *7th July*, 1844.
"6 *o'clock in the evening.*

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"I am on an island in the midst of the Rhine, my window opens on it, and the sound of its rushing volume of water is in my ears, and I have been for the last three hours watching the sunset first, and then the shadows deepening over the castle and rock of Drachenfels. If under these circumstances you expect a letter of anything but rapturous enthusiasm you will be disappointed. The very room where I write is strange for it was once a nun's cell. I got so far and only so far last night when I was in a very excited state, and as I am now sitting in the garden beside the Rhine with Rolandseck on my right, and Drachenfels before me I am not now much more endowed with common sense. Rolandseck is famed as the seat of a hermitage built by a lover named Roland, within sight of the nunnery, now turned into a hotel at which I am writing, where his lady love had taken the veil.

Schiller has made a very beautiful ballad out of this story, which I have just been reading, and which adds not a little to the interest of the scene. After I wrote to you from Brussels we went to the field of Waterloo, and returned to Brussels in time to go to Namur by the railroad. The field of Waterloo is not particularly striking as a scene now, though every year of peace adds to the interest of all that is associated with the price the world paid for it. We had a short abstract of the battle by a sergeant engaged in it, found a bullet, examined the holes in the wall at Huguemont, and achieved all the other orthodox and difficult things that have been done by all English tourists since the time of the battle. Mr. Reynolds had so thoroughly forgotten the scene that he could not tell whether any alterations had taken place since you were there. A comparison of dates proved that a large mound of earth with a lion on the top 200 feet high, and very nearly on the spot where the Duke ejaculated, 'Up guards and at em' has been erected since that time. It will be a very enduring memorial and I like it, though my aunt was angry at things not being let stay as they were on the day of the battle. We went from Namur to Liege by the Meuse, which we had heard was beautiful, but which we should not have found out for ourselves. One gentleman said he thought it prettier than the Rhine, but rather neutralised the effect of this, by observing, 'it will be better presently, there won't be so many rocks'. I never understood what the real enjoyment of scenery meant before, and I never expect to experience more of it. Byron has shown most exquisite taste in his selection of Drachenfels as the point of view for his bold description of the Rhine in 'Childe Harold'—the scene is a noble one in itself, the lines in the poem are nervous and impressive when read in England, but it would require a power of illustration as copious and exact as the poet's, to describe the pleasure the poem gives when you can turn from it to the scene it paints. No higher praise can be given to descriptive poetry than that it pleases most when thus read. It is a likeness which looks best side by side with the original. The Rhine does not foam, however, as he says it does, at least not at this spot. It is the calm swift rush of

a large body of water, which though not perhaps so imposing in reality when spoken of, because not so easily described, harmonises better with the characteristic attributes of the scene which are repose and grandeur."

"BOPPART,
"*12th August.*

"By staying at Nonnenwerth we have, we think, got a pretty good notion of what Rhine scenery really is, and a much higher opinion of it than do most racing tourists. We mean to go over the rest of the Rhine considerably faster, and get, we believe, to Schaffhausen, and there to enter the north-east of Switzerland, which, always subject to Murray's direction when we have him, we intend to make our object. Seeing Switzerland is not to be done in a fortnight. If I were left to myself I am by no means sure I should leave the Rhine. The beauties of nature are not written so that those who run may read them, and I would not run the risk of losing the full advantage to be derived from a few weeks on the continent by dissipating my attention over a great number of dissimilar objects. More grandeur I shall, I believe, assuredly see there, but I can hardly expect more pleasure than I have already had."

"*10th August.*—We this day left Nonnenwerth with great regret. The lonely stillness of the island in its most sequestered retreats, the 'frowning' grandeur of the Drachenfels and the greener and softer beauty of Rolandseck with the single arch on its summit, took a speedy hold on my admiration, which, in spite of the usual transient nature of such feelings, I hope they will long retain in my memory. We proceeded to Coblenz by the steamer—incomparably the worst way of seeing scenery that could be devised. The river is quite lost. One is hurried from one point to another so fast that one cannot gain an adequate idea of the height of rocks, which everybody that knows scenery at all very well knows to require time, and what is hastily seen leaves few lasting traces on the mind. I must delay till I have Murray at hand to secure accuracy as to names, the account of the places which most struck me in descending the Rhine to this place. I mean to set down the places that have most struck me in

the ascent of the Rhine. Briefly, both because I could not adequately describe them if I would, and I am too tired to do if I could. Nonnenwerth needs no mention in this list; that and the whole scenery of the Seven Mountains are so associated themselves in my mind with the ideas of pleasure and peace, that before I forget them my mind must undergo many organic changes for the worse. Except my home, and some other scenes that I have visited with those I love best, there is no scene that I have ever regarded with so much affection. Stillness and retirement have always a strong hold on me. The flourishing towns now covering the banks of the Rhine, compared with the huts of the serfs which in the middle ages occupied their sites, show the futility of praising more barbarous times at the expense of our own, because their remains with the marks of age on them have the grandeur of antiquity. A scoffer might sum up the remark, that the pleasure these ruins give us, as it arises from its reminding us of other times and modes of living with their pleasing contrast to our own, by saying that we admire them because we haven't to live in them, or to be near their founders. My tendency to prose, or as I call it *speculate* to-night is so great that I shall adjourn, especially as it waxes late.

"The only day lost since I came out, by a blunder (not of our own, but of the constituted authorities) we lost the steamer from Mayence to Mannheim in the morning. The dullness of the passage in the afternoon with a drizzle, and an ugly country is no pleasing subject of recollection. We stayed at Mannheim instead of Heidelberg, our appointed stage.

"To-day we richly effaced yesterday's disappointment. We came out to Heidelberg, and saw the castle, a magnificent architecture built at different times, on different plans. Architectural critics lay down their rules against all mixtures of styles, but are hardly sanctioned by the taste of mankind. Those who are fond of seeing how rich in resources the human race have now become, will look with pleasure on a building where many ages have sent their representative: those who are more habituated to look on works of art, as produced from the imagination of a single mind, and those who like to

figure to themselves their builders as a single generation, into whose feelings they are to enter, and whose habits they are to realise will not be gratified by finding their usual tastes, illusions, and criticisms wholly disturbed. There is a portion in the rich Italian style, and some parts are very old and rude Gothic. In 1764 it was struck by lightning, and some part was blown up by the French. The large masses of ruin in which the latter lie, especially where shaded with underwood, have a noble effect. I bought a print of the ruin in the state it was in, about 1764, at the period of its most perfect completion.

"On Wednesday morning we proceeded to Thun. It was our plan to get on to Lauterbrunnen or Interlacken at the least. But we were so taken with the sight of the lake of Thun, and the Muen, a bold and lofty promontory jutting out into the middle of it, with the glaciers behind it and setting off its sombre colour, that we stayed there, and strolled up to the summer house to see the sunset. I have seen many finer as far as clouds are concerned, but I never before watched the pink tint gradually fading from the 'Alpine snow'. It by degrees crept up the mountains as the sun descended till just before it descended the summits only partook of it. According to an old national custom in Switzerland still, I believe, preserved in retired valleys, this moment was seized to blow the Alpine horn which was re-echoed from hill to hill, and whenever the sound was heard, the shepherds fell on their knees to render thanks to God for the day's light, and their preservation. A similar custom of choosing sunset for a public act of adoration is very prevalent in the East. The fire-worshippers are now well known to every reader of poetry, and Mahomet, whose followers were the exterminators of the fire-worshippers, enjoined on them this same usage.

"At Lucerne is to be seen the famous statue by Thorwaldsen erected to the memory of the Swiss guards, who defended the Tuilleries on the day of the tenth of August against the populace of Paris. The Swiss lion in the agonies of death has his paw on a shield that bears the 'French fleur de lys'. It is hewn out of the solid rock, and reflected in a pond

artificially made in front of it. The dimensions are colossal, but it is only on approaching it very nearly that this is seen. The illusion is so perfect that the most natural feeling is wonder that the lion in the death grapple should be so perfectly still. Over the monument is written

Helvetiorum, Fidei et Virtuti.

Underneath are the names of those who in the words of the inscription did not shrink from their military oath. Seven hundred and fifty-six were killed and 301 saved—of these last one is now alive, and shows the monument. In such a scene the works of art are put to the hard trial as having to be seen immediately after gazing on the most magnificent of the labours of nature. But I felt here nothing like inferiority, the monument is every way worthy to be placed beside the Alps. Of the deed to which it is erected there can be only one opinion—it produced not one single result. The king had taken refuge with the National Assembly, and it was to his weakness that the bloodshed was owing. Yet every one feels a sentiment of admiration for these men, 'for their faith and valour,' and the moral feelings of mankind are as usual in the right, and as usual paying homage to what is in the highest degree beneficial. The habit of mind that leads to the courageous execution of what is required by fidelity to engagements, will always be most useful to mankind. I say this to obviate what an objector might induce against the justice of my admiration from my admitting the inutility of the act. He might say how much better for the world and themselves if their lives had been spared by flight. The feelings of mankind are shocked by such reasoning. The intellectual answer is that they themselves had been in the course of their good lives much more benefited by the habits of mind that led to the self-sacrifice, than they suffered by their painful death, and that the world is incalculably more benefited by these habits than by any others."

After returning to University College, Walter writes to his mother, 25th October, 1844:—

"Have you seen the article in the last *Edinburgh Review*

on Lord Chatham? It is a splendid article, and any person who has read the pages of Macaulay's former essays can be at no loss to discover the author. There is some curious matter about Burton and Sir William Pynsent—of which it is a wonder that there is no tradition in our neighbourhood.[1] There may be to be sure, though I have never heard of it. Pitt's purity and incorruptibility seem to have made a great impression on the English nation, although he certainly connived at many practices which would now be thought, as Lord Ashburton says, 'not over scrupulous'. There are some noble passages in the article, to which I have alluded, especially the concluding page; and this remark of the singular fact, that the last debate in which Chatham spoke was the first in which Burke spoke. 'It was indeed a splendid sunset and a splendid dawn.'[2] The Reviewer would have contributed to the orna-

[1] About this time took place one of the most singular events in Pitt's life. There was a certain Sir William Pynsent, a Somersetshire baronet, of Whig politics, who had been a member of the House of Commons in the days of Queen Anne, and had retired to rural privacy when the Tory party, towards the end of her reign, obtained the ascendency in her councils. His manners were eccentric. His morals lay under odious imputations, but his fidelity to his political opinions was unalterable. During fifty years of seclusion he continued to brood over the circumstances which had driven him from public life, the dismissal of the Whigs, the peace of Utrecht, the desertion of our allies. He now thought that he perceived a close analogy between the well-remembered events of his youth and the events which he had witnessed in extreme old age; between the disgrace of Marlborough and the disgrace of Pitt; between the elevation of Harley and the elevation of Bute; between the treaty negotiated by St. John and the treaty negotiated by Bedford; between the wrongs of the House of Austria in 1712 and the wrongs of the House of Brandenburg in 1762. This fancy took such possession of the old man's mind that he determined to leave his whole property to Pitt. In this way Pitt unexpectedly came into possession of near three thousand pounds a year. Nor could all the malice of his enemies find any ground for reproach in the transaction. Nobody could call him a legacy hunter. Nobody could accuse him of seizing that to which others had a better claim. For he had never in his life seen Sir William; and Sir William had left no relation so near as to be entitled to form any expectations respecting the estate."—Macaulay, "The Earl of Chatham".

[2] "The House of Commons heard Pitt for the last time, and Burke for the first time, and was in doubt to which of them the palm of eloquence

mental effect, and the instructive tendency of this article if he had quoted some of the many bursts which tradition ascribes to Lord Chatham, and in which his great strength lay. If I remember right he does not even quote Chatham's celebrated declaration, 'that it mattered not to him on which bank of the Tweed a man's cradle had been rocked'. We find some difficulty now in seeing the real grandeur of this saying. It should be remembered, that this was the same year with the publication of the No. 45 of the *North Briton*, and that Chatham was struggling to overthrow Lord Bute's ministry, whose unpopularity in the country was principally grounded on his Scottish origin, and then we can see whether it did not require much nobleness of character to reject the support of this illiberal prejudice. Of the authenticity of this saying there is no doubt, for it occurs in a public letter of Lord Chatham's written at the time. The explanation of Lord Chatham's views on the question of the right of the House of Commons to tax America (which he altogether denied) throws light on the well-known peroration of his great speech in the House of Lords: 'My Lords, if America falls she will fall like the strong man, she will lay hold on the pillars of the constitution and pull down the whole fabric along with her'. It is always a pleasing task to quote such sayings of high-minded and highly gifted men."

Having returned home for the Christmas vacation, Walter writes to his friend Edward Fry:—

"HERD'S HILL,
"*26th December*, 1884.

"MY DEAR FRY,

". . . My health is much mended. My Mother's family has suffered from hereditary consumption, and as my chest was delicate, my friends were alarmed perhaps needlessly. I have never read any of Lord Bacon's Latin works, but his essays ('Advancement of Learning' and the 'New Atlantis') are old favourites of mine. To ask in his day, 'is truth ever

should be assigned. It was indeed a splendid sunset and a splendid dawn."—Macaulay, "The Earl of Chatham".

barren?' required a nobleness of soul, which I know not how to characterise. His trust in the progress that would be made by unshackled human reason is not to be measured by ours. He may be thought to have lived in the primary formation of civilisation, to have taken his stand on the barren granite, and predicted the rise of luxuriant vegetation and exalted intelligence. I am getting very metaphorical this morning. The breaking up of the frost has set me think (*sic*) again. Macintosh says that diffused knowledge immortalises itself, and I believe he says so truly—are you acquainted with Macaulay's essays? They are very noble works, very eloquent, and I think for the most part wise. His views of English history are very good, and though perhaps a little borrowed from Hallam, are more original than so hackneyed a theme would have seemed to have promised. Perhaps, however, history ought to be continually re-written as each age gets larger views of truth, and more discriminating accuracy in the allotment of praise and blame. No age ought to be content with the views taken by its predecessor of past times, though it ought to be acquainted with them just as much as the boundaries of science are extended by those only who have surveyed the cultivated interior. Write to me as often as you can. I will not insult you by more promises, but I will do my best in future to make my promises more worthy of confidence."

In the spring of 1845, Walter's health had again caused great anxiety to his parents. In the following letter from his mother the first indication is given in the family correspondence of what eventually led Walter to leave London and join his father in the Bank and in the "Bridge" business, namely, the strong wish of his mother that he should make their home his home, their interests his.

She writes: "I am glad to remember that I always thought and said, the classes you had chosen were the most difficult and also the most abstracted from these general subjects of capacious, just, good, common and elevated sense, which I could better understand and was the most anxious about, since many a mathematician is certainly a learned booby. I used to say too, dearest, that if you could not bear the necessary

hard study now, you could not bear the hard study and work of the Bar hereafter, and I think Mr. Estlin seems to think the same, and gives a hint about *business*, whither, as you know, my wishes have always somewhat turned, though I would never for the world say so to slacken or contract what I do hope you will have, a thoroughly good education. But turn your attention a little to business when you are at home, try to understand Papa's cleverness in it, and if very or totally inferior at first, do not be depressed. If he were to die now, which God forbid! I am sure I should at once wish you to understand *what business is.* I have often told dearest Papa, it was a fault more of his habits than his intentions, that he had not, as a matter of course, made you better acquainted with its practical details and mysteries; but all paths are open to good sense, good feelings, good intentions and industry, and, as deep and abstract study is now thought so bad for you, you must seek to apply the stores already acquired in lighter converse and associates, and in more of the practical details, friendships and usages of daily life, and not be so much the studious, mawkish scholar any longer."

Again later Mrs. Bagehot writes: "Your health, my beloved, I trust is not worse. I often hope and pray that it will humble you *where you ought to be humbled*, namely, that as you must not *strain* your mind after very high and abstruse *attainments* you will 'exercise yourself' clearly to comprehend and express those which are obvious and easy. Your letter was spelt quite rightly. Mr. Reynolds says your faults at present remind him of his at your age, namely, that you are much fonder of finding out and attacking all authorities where they are wrong than you are of humbling yourself to obedience and deference, and learning of them where they are right. This is true, I think, at least I thought it becoming alarmingly true, but when you were at home last you were all sweetness to me, and I thought there was a manifest improvement (excepting in being so silent when the thoughts of your heart and mind should have expressed themselves), and in your letters of late, excepting this one, which does remind me of some of Mr. Reynolds about you. However, as you say, it is

much *better than none*, and clever letters, like clever people, bear being pulled to pieces and found fault with."

In October, 1845, Walter writes to her: "My Aunt Reynolds was looking very well, and very brisk. She said, however, that she had been ill, but I never saw her looking better. She believes that Newman is most likely bribed to become a Roman Catholic—at all events that he will be no loser in money matters by the change. As the Pope is a bankrupt it seems unlikely he should have much spare cash to send over to bribe English heretics. I never could understand what you told me in your letter about Mrs. J—— thinking it required great grace to be a nun or monk. If it means simply retiring from the world and living a life of contemplation in one place, I do not think there are many things easier and pleasanter. It is completely realising the *laissez faire* system of grappling with the evils of the world. Every one knows on a small scale how easy that is. That bodily penance is considered by most men easier than the everyday work of duty is quite evident from the history of all religions. Then Catholics would say that to live a life of prayer was difficult. But it is surely not so difficult as to live in the world a life of prayer and labour also. A monk's life *is* very captivating to my imagination as you know, but I do not think I could persuade myself into its being right. I do not think Mr. Newman will fill England with monasteries. A monastery beside a railroad would be a curious mixture of the customs of different ages. The extreme of physical inaction and the extreme of bodily exertion would be side by side. Nothing passes here of much moment. I have a good deal to do of various kinds, and shall be obliged to take some work with me to Hampstead this evening."

Bagehot, following his doctor's advice, did not go in for his B.A. degree that year. For the first time since he entered the College he did not compete with Mr. Hutton, who was placed in the first class and obtained the scholarship. In a letter to Bagehot at that time he writes:—

"Read the *Chimes*. I think it the finest thing Dickens has ever written. There are one or two passages quite sublime.

Public opinion has formed (I think) a judgment on it totally erroneous. I like it much better than the *Carol;* perhaps it may have appeared so beautiful by contrast to *Phelps' Optics*, not improbable!"

In a letter Bagehot writes in May, 1845, he analyses what he feels to be natural defects in the constitution of his mind. Though nineteen years of age, in writing carelessly his spelling was often erratic, and for such lapses he was criticised by his mother, and even his father, probably incited to notice them by Mrs. Bagehot, mentioned the matter to him.

In May, 1845, Bagehot writes to his father: "I think I mentioned to you in answer to a letter in which some months ago you asked for an account of what I was doing, that in classical matters I had found it necessary to make some selection; and that I had determined to attend less to the niceties of grammatical constructions, which differ but very little from one another, to the different readings found in different manuscripts of the same classical author, and the researches of etymology, than to the historical instruction, literary beauty and speculative philosophy which after all are the real sources of the value of the records of antiquity. I do not in the least undervalue that precise acquaintance with every detail and every nicety in the classical writings which forms the pursuit of profound scholars. It is absolutely necessary that *some* persons should become well acquainted with them, and thoroughly investigate and discuss their difficulties. But my taste does not lead me in that direction, nor is my mind fitted especially well for such pursuits. Yesterday I took a holiday and went with the Prichards and Mary Estlin to Hampton Court. There are many excellent pictures at Hampton Court beside the cartoons. The great strength of the collection is in the portraits. The originals of Kneller's portraits of Newton and Locke are there. I never saw any engraving that gave at all adequately the fixed, penetrating expression of Newton's eye. I had not very long to look at it, but the eye seemed to me almost poetic and even a little *wild*. Newton was certainly under some sort of mental aber-

ration for a short time in one part of his life, and all his great discoveries were made before that period."

Some discussion about Disraeli took place in the letters between Mrs. Bagehot and Walter about this time. Mrs. Bagehot did not understand Walter's arguments, and took the opportunity of sermonising him in her own characteristic manner :—

"HERD'S HILL.

"MY DEAR BLESSING,

"Your letter of this morning so anxiously expected (on my part I confess fearfully, so I was a little prepared) failed to impart the sunshine some of them bestow, either with regard to your body or mind; but may God chasten and renovate us all through His spirit and send us a happy meeting on Thursday. I cannot argue further on the points as you are your own authority, and are in dear Eliza's opinion and mine, one of the difficult writers whom we must first *understand* before we know whether we agree or not, and we quite fail to do this first in the letter of to-day. But, in the meanwhile, till Bagehot's grammar and dictionary supersede the old ones, we must spell and divide not according to *sound*, but the common usage of the schools.

"I tremble now for the mathematics, since, as I told Babbage, trying the sense of the obscure and difficult which I did not know, by the sense and reasoning which I did, I was afraid. But this will not improve your headache, darling, for you are never well, nor I either, when you and I have had 'any bit out break'. Let it not disturb the joy of our meeting for there is nothing like 'speaking the truth from the heart' even where people differ, and between parents and children these are the only discussions which really make correspondence interesting and valuable for time and eternity.

"Since I came from church I have been telling your dear Uncle that dear Papa, though he thinks you are wrong, scolds me for saying you are so, and said I abused *everybody*, and Uncle said 'so you do, you are the "Senior Wrangler" of the family'. Well! I dare not say 'peace, peace when there

is no peace,' but sincerely do I pray that all mankind should follow the example of the great humility of our Saviour."

The most notable event which occurred in Walter Bagehot's family in 1845 was the death of his "Uncle Stuckey". Mr. Vincent Stuckey was not only the centre of the business and social life of Langport and its neighbourhood, he was also the lord bountiful to the poor and needy of the town and country round, and his generous hospitable instincts made him beloved by all, rich and poor alike. Moreover, he had been in touch all his life with that far-away big world in London. This cast a glamour over his existence in the eyes of those folk in little Langport who had never seen London and knew they never would. Mr. Vincent Stuckey was the link between them and this great distant metropolis, and, as Mr. Ross recounts, "women and children crowded expectant to their doors and the entrances of the courts to watch the banker Stuckey on his return from London drive in with his carriage and postillions. . . . Mr. Stuckey kept a pack of hounds in Whatley, and dwelt in patriarchal style among his people, hospitable, freehanded and popular. He might be seen at times seated under the great elm on the Hill fronting the west door of the church and chatting with his neighbours." After passing the season in London he would bring down distinguished visitors to Hill House, well-known personages in the great London world. All these grand proceedings put no distance between him and his countrymen. He was none the less genial with his poorer neighbours, entering into their interests as keenly as if he had never himself known a wider sphere than that which he shared with them. His death therefore was the great event of the year to many people outside the circle of his relatives—and to many of his relatives it meant a momentous change in their lives. There appears to have been a competition among these as to who would write the epitaph for the tablet to be placed in Langport Church. A roll of attempts exist signed by various members of the family, in which are set forth his worldly distinctions no less than his virtues. As might be supposed, Mrs. Bagehot's fluent pen supplied one of these. The actual epitaph chosen

is not among them, and expresses admiration for his religious feelings, his character and virtues, rather than for his worldly successes. Though all mourned the loss of this notable person, his influence survived him. His cheery humour, his wholesome vigour, his encouraging sympathy produced a lastingly bracing effect on all who had known him. In some characteristics there was a striking resemblance between Walter Bagehot and his uncle. There was the same tendency in both to take a large wholesome view of every question, to dislike hair-splitting, and rather to prefer the broad aspect than the minutiæ of a subject.

Mrs. Bagehot felt her brother's loss greatly. Walter writes to her: "Please to remember me very kindly to all on the hill. I have no doubt that now you and my father are left alone, you will feel very much the real greatness of the loss you have sustained. But I think you will soon feel, as those to whom the hourly vacancy is less, already feel, that it is hardly possible long to think of my dear uncle with anything like gloom. All our associations with him were also associations with cheerfulness, happiness, and gratitude, and it is only the natural sadness of recent loss which can render such remembrances melancholy. Gloom cannot long linger round the memory of one whose presence always dispelled it." Mr. Stuckey frequently helped Mr. Bagehot very effectually in his home trouble by taking his sister on travels with him and his family, and by inviting her to pay visits to them in London. These changes were invariably found to be beneficial.

At the age of twenty Bagehot was considered an authority in criticism by his friends. In the spring of 1846 Edward Fry sent him poetry written by his brother, asking Bagehot his opinion as to its merits. "Your brother's poetry is very graceful and pleasing," Bagehot writes, "and what is more uncommon quite genuine and unaffected. From my former knowledge of him I should have thought quiet, good-natured satire the species of composition for which nature had intended him. I do not know whether either he or you, however, think satire right. To me its best forms seem no unfitting expression of

reverential thoughtfulness. I do not think your brother will take it amiss if I venture to recommend condensation to him in any thing which he may write hereafter. I do not mean that there is anything in this piece which I want shortened or omitted, but diffuseness seems to me to be the besetting sin of our recent literature. In poetry it is worse than in prose, for when the intellect is addressed, it is no harm to follow out principles and reasonings into their most minute applications. But in poetry, and indeed in eloquence where the feelings of the poet are expressed, and the feelings of the orator's hearers are addressed, to give numerous details and to repeat the same details more than once seems like a botanist who, in delineating the beauty of flowers, should recount the number of stamens they possess. *Some* details are essential in poetry, because no affections cling to general ideas, and to pale unhealthy looking abstractions, but the poet's genius and taste are shown in their combination and selection, not as some poets seem to imagine in their accumulation. I hardly know any recent poetry not chargeable with too great prolixity except perhaps the lyric parts of Campbell, and the very best parts of Shelley and Byron. The last (Don Juan excepted) is not *very* chargeable with this fault perhaps. What a command of language and illustration is shown in 'Childe Harold'! What a pity that he had nothing better to say than what an uncomfortable place this world is! After all he might have written a great work if he had lived till now. He was just setting himself to work, and the true cure of despondency and moral scepticism is action—that is right action. Do you know Hood's poems? Of very recent poetry I think they are perhaps the best. They show quickness and delicacy of feeling, and a very happy fancy capable of very good ornamental work. The great depths of the human heart are only for those of a great creative imagination, and where among living poets shall we find that greatest of God's gifts. However, Hood was a man who took his knowledge of mankind not from tradition but from his eyes.

"I shall have to read some physiology for my degree, but I am as ignorant of natural history as I used to be. If I have

any leisure time after taking my degree, I hope to remedy this gross defect in some measure at least. I have been most occupied for the last year in 'science' and metaphysics. I do not know whether the latter science has engaged your attention much. In these days of universal controversy we are constantly required to know the ultimate principles of belief on which the whole superstructure of knowledge rests, and also to be able to detect any false claimants to the title of *self*-evident truths which cannot be proved from others and carry their own certainty with them. These truths having their root in the structure of the mind itself can only be known by a metaphysical enquiry. I have been reading some of Kant, the founder of the modern school of metaphysics in Germany and France. He appears to me to have been a man of preternatural acuteness, no little confidence in himself, to have been very fond of the complexities of an artificial system, and to have been defective in the power of diffusing simplicity over a subject by the constant application of master truths. However he has greatly advanced the study of mental philosophy and to anyone who wishes to cultivate the power to acute discrimination his works may be recommended as constantly requiring the exercise of that faculty. It is a great pity that he had so little power of explaining his meaning. His vast and barbarous terminology is enough to terrify any Englishman, but one who like myself is a fanatical devotee in the service of metaphysics."

In the same month Bagehot wrote a letter on certain points of political economy to his father.

"I have just caught sight of a passage in Mr. Disraeli's speech in the House of Commons last night where he seemed to be referring to John Mill's Essay on the laws that regulate interchange between nations in favour of reciprocity, meaning to apply that principle to *all* duties whatever. I cannot believe however that even Mr. Disraeli would make such a flagrant misquotation. The fact is that John Mill very carefully draws the distinction between duties for revenue and duties for protection, and only applies the principle of reciprocity to the former. But Mr. Disraeli seemed to be arguing from the

authority of John Mill that Lord G. Bentinck and himself should not be treated with such contempt. The essay begins with an allusion in the highest terms of eulogy to Mr. Ricardo's chapter on foreign trade, of the principles of which the essay by John Mill only professes to be a development. Ricardo's chapter John Mill thinks, is the foundation of everything which is known with scientific accuracy on the subject. Of John Mill's opinions there can be no doubt as he has been writing articles against the Corn Laws for many years in the *Westminster Review.* I yesterday accidentally met with an article by him written at the time of the passing of the Tithe Commutation Act, which he says 'takes the tithe off the consumer and lays it on the landlord. Tithe will no longer operate as any discouragement to cultivation. It will no longer be one of the expenses of production which the price must be sufficient to repay; but a fixed proportion of the rent, that is of the surplus after the expenses are paid. It will be liable indeed to increase, but only as the rent increases, and can never under any circumstances be anything but a deduction from the rent.' As this opinion so exactly coincides with that to which you came when you were considering the subject when the Corn Law Bill was first introduced, I thought you would be interested in seeing it. Mr. John Mill thinks that the reason of so 'unlandlordlike a proceeding was a wish to keep up the Corn Laws'; and if I understand him rightly maintains that the increased advantage, which the removal of the Tithe unaccompanied by an alteration of the Corn Law, would give to the home producer over the foreigner, would cause an increased cultivation of poorer soils, and therefore a rise of rent. So that the landlord would be indirectly counterbalanced for the burden of the tithe which he was taking upon him so long as the Corn Laws were maintained. Mr. Mill therefore though approving of the provisions of Tithe Commutation regretted that from not being accompanied with a corresponding reduction of the duties on foreign corn, it operated as an increase of 'protection to domestic industry' and therefore to a comparatively unprofitable employment of English capital. Apropos of all this political Economy would

you be so kind as to send me the reference to Mr. McCullock's article or articles in the *Edinburgh Review* on 'Absenteeism'. I have engaged to make a speech to prove that the expenditure of the income of absentees in a foreign country does not diminish the wealth of the country from which they emigrate. Brady who is an Irishman is to take the opposite side. From Ricardo's chapter on Foreign Trade, and an essay by John Mill on the 'Influence of Consumption on Production,' I have a clear notion of the general argument, or I should not have undertaken to bring forward the subject. But there are some parts of the questions that seem intricate, and that will require some thought to be able to put clearly in a speech. It will be very good practice, however, and I mean to take pains about it."

Substance of a Speech on the question, "Does the Expenditure of the Income of Absentees in a Foreign Country diminish the Wealth of the Country from which they emigrate?"

"I have troubled you, sir, to read the question a second time in order that it may be well understood by all present, that the question under discussion is a purely economical question. We have nothing to do with the moral effects of the emigration of absentees which indeed we could hardly discuss without knowing something definite of their moral character. We are only concerned with the effect of their expenditure on the National Wealth. I certainly admit that the assertion 'that the removal of absentees from one country to another does not by withdrawing the expenditure of their income, cause a loss to the country from which they emigrate,' is generally considered to be a paradox. Indeed I unconditionally concede that if as is the common case the absentee be a rich proprietor in the country, it will generally be found that the neighbouring village or town at which he has been used to purchase articles, will in general suffer and dwindle away in his absence. Yet if this opinion were admitted to be a paradox, the opposite opinion lies under a similar reproach. For that opinion derives a clear increase of national wealth from 'the expenditure of income'. Political Economists and

people of common sense have been accustomed to look to labour and saving as the sources of accumulation. To the sentimental idolence that loves to bewail the perpetual hardships of human toil it will be consolatory to find that they have been mistaken. It is delightful to learn that consumption and expenditure are sources of wealth not perhaps of equal but certainly of rival importance, assuredly in spite of the popular opinion it would seem, that the true paradox, if paradox there be, is in the opinions of those who expect an augmentation of wealth, not from production but from expenditure, not from labour but from consumption. In the outset of the discussion I call attention to the fact that we are only concerned with that portion of the income of absentees which is expended, and that we have no concern with the portion of it which may be saved. I beg gentlemen to keep close to the real subject as defined by the terms of the question. If the savings of an absentee are added to the capital of a foreign country they increase its wealth, and then the native country of the absentee suffers by not having these savings added to her wealth. But this is quite distinct from any assertion as to the expenditure of the income of absentees.

"For some purposes it will be convenient to speak of the country to which absentees emigrate, and I apprehend it will be conceded that if they do no good to the country to which they emigrate, they will do no harm to the country *from* which they emigrate. Suppose then a certain number of absentees emigrate from Ireland to France, would the expenditure of their income be advantageous to France? or would it be injurious to Ireland that it should no longer be the seat of their expenditure? If the absentee had all the articles which he required exported from Ireland, would his consuming them in France and not in Ireland be any way injurious to Ireland? Is Ireland injured by an Irishman's eating Irish beef and Irish potatoes on board a Cork steamer? Surely if she is not, no one will maintain that there is any harm done to Ireland, if the absentee take those same articles on shore in France and eat them there. I go on to prove that what really happens is scarcely more than this; with only the additional complexity

necessarily arising when a great number of commodities cease to be distributed in one way by being distributed in another, and when this change makes a corresponding change in the departments of industry necessary to produce them. There are some people, I believe, who think that the fact of the absentee's not using the Irish commodities, but French commodities which he had received in exchange for his own Irish commodities, gives an advantage to France. But let the French commodities and the Irish be laid in two parcels. We know them to be of equal value for they were received one in exchange for the other. It is admitted that the absentee's using the Irish commodities is no injury to Ireland, and no advantage to France. If then he consumes instead an equivalent amount of French commodities, is there not the same amount of wealth in France and the same in Ireland? Those then who concede that an Irish absentee's eating and consuming in France the goods he had been used to consume in Ireland would not be hurtful, cannot without obvious absurdity maintain that his exchange, those Irish goods for French goods, and consuming the last is hurtful to Ireland, or advantageous to France. The fact of the Irish goods being given in exchange for French goods makes then no difference and we can conclude that in a state of barter there would be injury done to Ireland.

"I do not know to what extent my honourable friend intends to complicate this subject by introducing into the discussion disquisition on money and bills of exchange. I believe that here as elsewhere bills of exchange are mere means of facilitating interchange, that they are mere inventions for the convenience of traders and travellers, and introduce no new elements into this question. As to money, it is obvious that the incomes of any numerous body of absentees could not either safely or conveniently be transmitted in the precious metals. But as there must be *something* exported from Ireland, or Irish absentees could not derive the means of subsistence from their Irish estates, it is clear that what they require will be exported from Ireland in those commodities which it is at the particular time most advantageous to export. There is indeed another

process differing in its details, but coincident with this that I have been describing in its effects. The French exports, to come back to our former instance, may be diminished, and the amount of Irish exports being undiminished, we shall have as before an increase of commodities in France, and diminution of commodities in Ireland exactly corresponding to the amount of articles which the absentees require for the purpose of consumption. This remains exactly as it was, before the consideration of money was introduced into the subject. In case my honourable friend should throw dust in your eyes with bills of exchange I will read a clear statement taken from a writer on the subject of what I believe to be the real facts of the transaction between absentees and the persons with whom their emigration brings them into contact. The writer is supposing that an English landowner emigrates to the Netherlands, and observes: 'The operation of a bill of exchange in connection with the absentee landlord would be this; he probably requires many articles of English produce from habit, but whether or no, there must be an export of English goods to the amount of foreign goods he consumes, otherwise his remittances could not be made to him. This bill represents his share of the corn and cattle upon his farm, but the merchant at Antwerp who does not want corn and cattle transmits it to London in payment for the cotton and hardware which he does want, or there may be another process. The agent in England of the absentee landlord may procure a bill on the merchant at Antwerp recognising in that bill the representation of a debt he has incurred in England, and hands over the proceeds to the bearer of the bill. In either case the bill represents the value of English commodities exported to foreigners.' I beg that it may be distinctly understood that these complex matters are not introduced into the debate as essential to my argument. I should like nothing better than that there should be an agreement entered into by all speakers not to name money or bills of exchange in this connection. I want nothing more than the conclusion that money and bills of exchange only shorten and facilitate transactions which would go on without them in a state of barter. I merely want you to keep

the fact before your eyes that (in our former instance) an amount of Irish commodities is exported to France exactly equivalent to the French commodities which the absentees consume; and that as what is consumed by the absentees is exactly equivalent in consequence of their emigration, no advantage accrues to France; and that as what is exported from Ireland is exactly equivalent to what they would have consumed if they had remained in Ireland, their emigration causes no diminution in Irish wealth."

After returning to London from Herd's Hill in August, Bagehot began working for his degree and describes to his father the course of his studies.

"I am principally engaged on Pure Mathematics at present, and am going over carefully all the necessary ground—I am going rather slowly perhaps, but I do not wish to leave any enemies in my rear. It is best, of course, to take the Pure Mathematics before the applied, since unless you know a science well applications will certainly be obscure. After I have finished the Pure Mathematics, I shall read the classical books thoroughly, and then go to the Natural Philosophy, that is to say to the applied Mathematics. Of course I shall also read the Physiology, Logic, etc., but the main contention and difficulty is in the other, and therefore I thought you would like to know the order in which I had taken the subjects. I took the classics in the middle for the sake of the variety which will be refreshing. I have been reading some of the Theory of Numbers, which De Morgan says is the best exercise for the head possible, and certainly is a hard stretch for my reading powers and memory."

On 15th August, 1846, Bagehot writes to his father:—

". . . Yesterday I went out to wish Hutton good-bye, and he asked me to walk with him into the city, and as I shall not see him for a year at least, I thought you would not object to his infringing on your time. I shall miss him a great deal. Apropos of the law, I have just been reading in Foster's life two letters very strongly disapproving of the profession. He seems to have had a dislike of 'lawyers' generally, and to have thought their standard of morality and their practice decidedly inferior

to those of the rest of the community. He does not allege any proof of this however, nor does he say what branch of the profession he means by 'lawyers,' which may mean attorneys or barristers or both. I believe there is an impression of the sort among many well-intentioned persons, and from conversations which I have had with Dr. Hoppus at various times, I should think that a dislike of law and lawyers was rather general among the independent dissenters. This seems too to be an old notion, as Cromwell, who in general spoke the opinions of religious and scrupulous dissenters in his day, used to say that English Law was 'an ungodly jungle full of snares for the feet'. Do you think there is any ground for saying that the average morality of barristers is lower than that of the rest of the community? If it were so there would arise a presumption that there was something not right in their occupations and perhaps in the practice of advocacy which (though Foster does not mention it) is certainly the *most* disputable part of their calling. But surely public men who come from all ranks and all occupations are a fair test of the morality and honour of the different classes to which they belong, and it would be very difficult to prove that during the last fifty years distinguished lawyers had been found more wanting in probity and public spirit than other eminent public men. Indeed until very recent times Sir S. Romilly and Francis Horner, who were both lawyers, are the very strongest instances of a reputation depending very much on moral worth. Nor do Lord Eldon and Lord Stowell, to take men very inferior morally to Romilly and Horner, at all, I imagine, fall short of the average probity of the statesmen of their time. If Brougham's youth be allowed to compensate for the aberrations of his old age, Lord Lyndhurst is the only instance that occurs to me of a lawyer in recent times gaining very high eminence, and being notoriously destitute of character. It is probable that lawyers are opposed to alterations in law which unprofessional philanthropists think so obviously advisable, that they impute unfairly moral obtuseness to all their opponents. But this seems like the mercantile men who came to Mr. Huskisson and asked for free trade in

every part of commerce but that in which they were concerned. No one who has fitted his mind to one system likes to take it out again, and shape it to a new one; nor can a disinclination to see the possibility of this change being for the better, be justly imputable to any one as a moral fault. The more I think of it, the more I incline to think the principle of advocacy quite defensible, though of the details I can of course know nothing. Indeed I am staggered more by the difficulties seen in it by Arnold and persons partaking of his deeply conscientious character, than by anything which I can see myself in the practice.

"I cannot close this without telling you that my letters from my mother have been very comfortable ones, although I see the want in them which you point out. One cannot wonder that her mind should be jaded by what she has gone through. It brings before one very strongly the loss of my Uncle Stuckey who would so easily have given her mind some of the freshness and elasticity which it wants now. Yet how much better is it than we expected six weeks ago."

He writes to his mother: "I have got a long essay to write about 'Causation,' and the metaphysical theories about it, of which there are not a few. The subject is very mysterious, though most writers say their view of it is complete and exceedingly simple. I am reading a long discussion of the subject by Dr. Brown who thought that he had explained the whole subject, but I am afraid he left the matter exactly where he found it, in the most material points. The main difficulty is in analysing the ideas of cause, power, agency, efficiency and efficacy, etc., and in applying them correctly after the analysis to the external world, and to the mind. There is no reason, however, for turning this letter into a metaphysical essay.

". . . It will be a great thing for good thorough Whigs if we get rid of the Irish Church, and if, as you say, Lord Ashley says Sir R. Peel is prepared to destroy it. I wish I could believe that Lord John Russell was ready to pull it down, but he did not used to be; and I think he would prefer endowing the Catholics as well as the Protestants. Lord Grey would

go to work in a more complete manner perhaps, and perhaps the cabinet would find it pretty nearly as hard to agree about the matter, as you do at Herd's Hill. Nevertheless as Arnold used to say energetically *something* must be done. What the dominance of Protestantism has brought Ireland to, we see; and one sees small wisdom in keeping the spiritual instruction of the Irish people in the hands of those under whom the lower classes have grown up to their present frightful condition. When things are at the worst, some change seems likely to be for the better."

Later he writes :—

"My dearest Mother,

"You would do the state a great service if you could point any way in which the state could teach religion to *all* its subjects, when those subjects held different creeds, and believed many of them that the creeds of others would doom them to misery for ever. The religion taught in a national system of education ought in my view to be a national religion. But in England we have no national religion. One part of the nation believes one thing, and another believes that the creed of the first is fatal to their salvation. Why the very rulers who are to select the religion have every sort of diversity of opinion, and are we to postpone all education till they agree? What you say about religion being 'the one thing needful' is true in one very important sense; but religion is not the *only* thing needful to make people intelligent and instructed. That reading and writing are quite necessary to give any degree of intellectual activity in this age, I cannot suppose that you doubt, though your expressions about religion being the only thing required would certainly seem to imply it. Really one does hope with Carlyle that after 'a thousand years of ineffectual consideration, England really will find courage and capacity to teach all Englishmen the alphabet. It is (he continues, I quote from memory) the belief of the present writer that such a task does *not* require superhuman powers.' It may be very true that in planning a Utopian community, one would give to the

Government supposed to be religious and agreed in opinion the task of providing a religious education; but here in England what are we to do? One thing at least experience and fact seem to show that *unless* the people are instructed, they will not be religious. Are they religious now? Can teaching the alphabet make them *worse?*"

As the examinations for his degree drew near the usual despondency is expressed. "I have never been without fears and I am now entirely without hopes," Bagehot writes to his father, "though as the time draws near my fears increase faster than my hopes."

Mr. Hutton writes: "Do get the scholarship. I know you can if you try."

The day before the examinations Bagehot suffered so much from giddiness, headache, and pain in his side that Dr. Hoppus advised his not going to Somerset House. However he did.

"The examiners," he writes to his father, "have been very kind, and seemed very sorry for my illness yesterday. Mr. Jerrard said that in my papers on Tuesday I showed myself very well prepared, and as this is all the good I am likely to get from this examination, I had better make the most of the compliment. I am convinced that the papers I sent up yesterday were so bad, that *no* honours can be awarded to me."

". . . There is no use in writing my own opinions and conjectures on the matter however, as the event will soon show us certainly how the matter really lies. I never met with anyone who was a good judge of how he had done at an examination, and of course no one can know how those who are competing with him have done. Mr. Grote is going to preside at the distribution this year in compliment, I suppose, to the history of Greece which he has recently published. Is it not singular that a Benthamite politician should publish two bulky volumes on the poetical legends of ancient Greece? I have heard that it is rather imaginative in some parts which no one would have guessed from the author's speeches on the 'Ballot'. I hope to be able to get out of town either to-morrow or Saturday week. I have some work to finish for Mr. De Morgan which will detain me till that time. It is no compliment to say that

I want to come home exceedingly; for I am so tired of London that I should be glad to be out of it on any terms. My dislike of London came on quite suddenly, as it always does, two or three days ago. I know from experience that it will not go off till I have had a run in the country for a short time. I shall, as you know, soon have to come back to bricks and smoke, but this must be endured. I think the people who come up to London 'for the season' must be insane; or they must have different tastes from mine. I will now collect all the necessary information about the Inns of Court. I suppose you are watching the slow, but sure progress of the Corn Bill through the House of Lords with considerable interest. I have not read any of Ld. Ashburton's speeches in favour of his 'amendments'. Does he still adhere to the doctrine that wages rise and fall with the price of corn? In 1815 it is remarkable that this was the universal opinion. One man did say something that indicated a doubt about it. But Horner put him down by saying he hoped the house 'would hear no more of such heresies'. Ld. Ashburton, who does not seem to get wiser as he gets older, may have in this instance kept to the creed of his youth; though he is now doing all in his power to destroy the credit he gained by opposing the passing of the Corn Law thirty years ago."

Notwithstanding his confidence in having failed Bagehot passed in the first class and obtained the scholarship.

CHAPTER VI.

AN INTERREGNUM.

THUS ended the days at University College. Bagehot left Dr. Hoppus and took lodgings in Great Coram Street. Intellectual and moral philosophy were the subjects he then took up for special study, being those in which he wished to take his M.A. degree. Mr. Hutton notes in his memoir, however, that "Shakespeare, Keats, Shelley, and Wordsworth, Coleridge, Martineau, and John Henry Newman, all in their way, exerted a great influence over his mind, and divided, not unequally, with the authors whom he was bound to study—that is, the Greek philosophers, together with Hume, Kant, J. S. Mill, and Sir William Hamilton—the time at his disposal".

Mr. Hutton was at Heidelberg in 1847 studying theology, and falling in love with Miss Mary Roscoe. Walter missed him greatly. He returned to England in September, 1847, to study at the Manchester New College. Dr. Martineau was at that time the head of theological learning at the College, and accessible Liverpool was the residence of the Roscoe family. He writes to Bagehot: "I shall certainly not go in for my M.A. next time, perhaps not for two or three years. I have little or no time to spare for extra reading, and if I had *every day* vacant, I might as well talk of beating you, as of confuting a Chinese on a metaphysical question in his own language. Martineau's lectures on Moral Philosophy are very splendid, even more able than I hoped. He is lecturing now on Necessity and Causation."

The following, from among many letters, may be quoted to show the kind of discussions which Bagehot and Mr. Hutton carried on in their correspondence with one another :—

"6 Great Coram Street,
"20*th September*, 1847.

"My dear Hutton,

"I have left your letter so long unanswered, that I fear you will have forgotten the points which you told me to write about. I concur with you in thinking, that minds not self-conscious must be comparatively deficient in aspiration in the sense of being but little occupied with the future state of their own minds. I do not know exactly how far to agree with you about J. H. N.'s (John Henry Newman) personal character. I rather doubt his having less than the average of self-consciousness. Do not you unconsciously take Martineau as the standard whose self-consciousness is many million sizes above that of ordinary mortals? I do not think F. W. N.'s (Francis W. Newman) much, if at all, below the average: he (and his brother perhaps also) has quite enough to make him a much better metaphysician than he is: but it seems to me, that perhaps owing to over-activity and restlessness of mind both the Newmans combine with a great facility of analysing to a certain extent, a great disinclination (and almost an inability) to analyse further. Also I think he is quite imaginative enough to realise futurity or anything else as definitely as he pleased. I am not sure that he does want aspiration (much at any rate) in the sense of not desiring to do his duty better. Martineau's aspirations very often amount to wishes for harder or higher duties than those which he has at the time: and these M. would not think it *right* to indulge; he would think it his duty to put forth his strong will and drive them off. To finish about Newman, I do not think his want of self-consciousness can be the reason for his wanting precise moral convictions. Arnold, who was not self-conscious at all scarcely, had very precise notions of duty. I think in Newman's case the reason is that his intellect is more subtle than his sense in discriminating: he can conceive finer shades of feeling and motive than his conscience will confidently estimate.

"As to the peaceful nature of Protestantism. I only meant that it repudiated the characteristic work of the Catholic military ages; *viz.* the organised *living* authority to be obeyed

in all points of faith and practice; the notion of 'an oracle' is essential to a positive Revelation; and I do not imagine that the Protestant belief in this is to be accounted for from the circumstances of a period but simply from the truth of the doctrine. If by the construction of the human intellect truth has an advantage on the whole, we need only seek in social circumstances for the sources of error. I have just read (in a charge of Archdeacon Manning's) rather a good sentence on ecclesiastical history. 'The world persecuted the church in the beginning; espoused her in the middle ages; is disowning her now.' It must have been an immense gain in the middle ages that all their systematised thought was Christian and spiritual. Ever since Hobbes in England, there has been a systematic unchristian philosophy constructed by men of this world (*i.e.* men who have not much cultivated the moral sense); and one picks up scraps of this in one's infancy, and it takes much trouble to be rid of them. There was much worldliness in the middle ages no doubt, but there seems to have been no organised philosophy to keep it in countenance. However, anyone who can understand Hume, will not be in a hurry to believe any *irreligious* philosophy. The choice for a man is whether he will believe in God and duty, or whether he will believe nothing. I agree with you quite in saying that the *Saint's Tragedy* is deficient in severity of moral feeling. Does not this amount to saying that there is a Germanism about it; I mean is not this the point in which the German character is defective; a severe discrimination as to voluntary acts? There is (as it seems to me, but I am a poor judge) a rich overflow of feeling, but a want of strictness in the details of action. Please to answer this. I am inclined altogether to disbelieve the thesis which the *Saint's Tragedy* is to prove about celibacy. I think it may be held, that the highest life is an imitation of Christ's not only in its spirit but in its characteristic circumstances. For perhaps these circumstances comprise the maximum of opportunities for self-denial and for a form of action that will morally improve mankind.

"About celibacy I think St. Paul argues satisfactorily that it is essential to an *absorption* in the highest end of human

action : this is undoubtedly the teaching religion in such a manner as effects a diminution of sin among mankind. This cannot be the unremitting pursuit of anyone who is a member of a family. Daily and secular cares will lay hold on a large fraction of human life ; to follow in the highest manner our Lord's earthly profession, we must be, as He was, homeless. There is an important principle which seems to me to qualify this. It is that no man should begin to put down the disinterested part of his original nature, unless he has thoroughly put down the selfish and the unnatural ; it would be an awful thing, and yet it must have happened often, after conquering the affections to succumb to the appetites. The affections are the best aids in what may be called the inevitable sphere of human action ; while necessary duties are neglected, it is sin to dispense with any aid in getting through them, and to undertake harder ones beside. To those who have to lead a secular life, marriage is, I suppose, in the majority of cases, an assistance in the performance of duty ; it is necessary to keep a strong habitual feeling of disinterested affection (in the case of most men) toward existing persons whom they habitually see, and it is very difficult to do this in the case of friends, because they are dispersed so widely and have such different spheres of duty. You know Arnold's saying, that a family, or religious intercourse with the poor, was necessary for an Englishman. I think it might with pains be generalised into a complete view of the subject. About divine self-denial I think we quite agree. I only meant that it ought to be kept consistent with the truth that the manner of virtue depends on the unitedness of the mind in point of active motive, and the greatest strain of executive. I like the second verse of your hymn. The first and third not so well ; they strike me as written under the orders of your will. Nobody but Newman can contract with his imagination for a supply of verses. I send you some of mine which are gloomy and I fear dull."

To William Roscoe Bagehot writes :—

"I left at your rooms a day or two ago a huge pile of books of yours, which I hope turned up in due course, and also three dishevelled looking copy books of mine full of an

essay on Shelley. Concerning this latter if you, or Osler, or both of you, would send me your opinion I should be glad, because I have an indefinite respect for it at times which makes me fear in moments of sanity that it is hopelessly and utterly bad. If you have read it and think the last, you will please to write and say so in so many words. You need not write a detailed criticism if you do not like, or in any other case necessarily write that if you concur in the opinion of my reasonable moments. Have you seen a play called the *Saint's Tragedy* just come out, written by a Mr. Kingsley, a clergyman somewhere? Buy it and read it if you have not seen it, as it will agreeably diversify your Easter holidays. I admire it excessively, it is more like the old English dramatists than anything since then; and takes up deeper problems than they for the most part meddle with. You are dreadfully fastidious about modern plays; but I will *answer* for your admiring this a good deal. I am in enormous haste as the post *ought* to be gone; but Somerset postmen are not incarnations of punctuality."

Mr. Hutton writes:—

"I was in Liverpool on Sunday and heard Martineau preach a very splendid sermon *indeed*. I was staying with the Roscoes, and they had a letter from William saying he had been looking over a critique of yours on Shelley; what is this? and may I see it? I enclose you the 'Jungfrau' (a sonnet). Send me word how you like it, and whether you assent to my criticisms on your two pieces and adopt them or not. *Many* thanks for them. In themselves they are fine, but they look to me as if they had been written in pain or melancholy, and while they are certainly not the *less* fine for that, they are yet more interesting to me as coming more from your personality than your other things, which have generally been too *im*personal."

About this time Bagehot writes:—

"MY DEAR HUTTON,

"I came to Town last Monday, and have been intending to write before, but have not fancied that I was able.

When I received your last letter, I intended to write to you an invective against your remarks on Judaism in it; but owing to delay my wrath has in great measure evaporated. The view of the character of God contained in it seems to me in the main coincident with the Christian, bearing somewhat the same relation to it that the grand does to the sublime. What you say of the Patriarchs seem to me to come to this much only: that notwithstanding particular acts of meanness or grossness or cowardice, men who are on God's side in the great conflict between good and evil, and are in earnest on His side are in His favour, and therefore His friends. If you grant this, and it is difficult for a Christian to deny it, there is no difficulty in believing the view which the Old Testament takes of such men as Abraham or David. I have sometimes thought that anthropomorphism (if the word is to retain its usual offensive sense) ought to be defined as the attributing to God any peculiarity of human nature not essential to our conception of perfect holiness; and perhaps it ought to include the taking this our conception as an accurate result, and not as an approximation more or less distant from the result. As, however, there are other names for this last form of irreverence, this much abased need not perhaps be stretched to include it. There are obviously two ways of holding the doctrine that man is God's image, one the Greek of fashioning the Gods on the exact model of interesting and attractive men; and the other that of the Christians, and according to their light of the Jews, *viz.* the imputing to man the faculty of obtaining and in part also the possession of moral attributes resembling those of God so far as what is finite can resemble what is infinite. And the first is perhaps the most winning form of anthropomorphism. I have read Newman's book on the Jews and think it very dull and poor. What does Martineau think of it? I do not like to speak evil of a book of Newman's, but I cannot speak well of this one. There is no appreciation of the poetry or the religion of the Jews, nor of the great characters in the history."

Walter Bagehot and Mr. Hutton were in those days amusing themselves by writing verses which they sent to one

another to criticise. Mr. Hutton writes of verses by Bagehot: "I admire exceedingly your two shorter pieces, the other not so much; it is *cold* imagination, and not graceful. You seem fond of idiots, there's a good deal about them. I have seldom read a finer verse than the first four lines beginning :—

Since dull-eyed Love with idiot haste
O'er human graves has restless paced,
Musings have soothed at evening hour,
As woman's words man's world-worn power.

"There is something of a far deeper sense of weariness and over-*taxed will* than I think you ever felt, or at least expressed, till lately in the two exquisite lines :—

Since labours' weary curse began
To dog the steps of anxious man.

"Your imagination is, I think, something like Gibbon's description of his own, 'rather strong than beautiful,' and it is in the sublimer half of poetry that you excel most, not in the beautiful half. I admire both pieces *far more* than anything I have read of yours before."

Other verses which Walter Bagehot wrote about this time betoken moods of profound melancholy, such as the following :—

As an idiot mother prowling
For a lost and roaming brood;
As a wild hyæna howling
For her foul and cankered food;
So ravenous pain strays scowling
Round lean life's banquet crude.

SONNET

on your (Mr. Hutton's) speaking of "causeless melancholy".

The highest spirits deepest sorrows claim,
The noblest destinies are tinged with fear;
To sadden careless instinct Jesus came,
From gladdest eyes to draw the scalding tear.
No pain is causeless; o'er God's mightest sons
Two angels Grief and Guilt divide their sway;
He who affliction's icy tempest shuns
Must tread a path where *fouler* breezes stray.

The heavy steps of sad repentance lie
Along the burning sands by passion spread,
But they who shrink not from a wintry sky,
High o'er the Alps of *sinless* sorrow tread.
The pilgrim bent Messiah's land to gain
Must pass a desert, or a mountain chain.

April, 1848.

Bagehot writes to Mr. Hutton: "I send you Roscoe's criticism on my poems which will amuse you. I like both your sonnets, but the Pauline one the best; as the Star (which is he?) is in your personal equation and not in mine. Isn't it rather a petty form of fire worship? Also is not

Cluster around thee *every* smile and sigh
Spring from affections mocking times control,

rather a large consignment of feeling to send on so distant a voyage? Does not the attraction (or the attractiveness at least) vary *directly* as the square of the distance? I met your family (*i.e.* your sisters and your eldest brother) at the Torrington Square Roscoes. And I told them in a moment of temporary insanity that you seemed in good spirits; your last letter being *awfully* dismal. I hope I'm not a moral agent at times. I often say the exact contrary of what I should know very well, if I thought the least, in a calm tone of utter conviction."

At no time, it would appear, was Walter Bagehot more painfully confronted with the insolvable mystery of his home trouble than in the years between his college life and his final decision to leave London and turn his energies to business. This decision, it will be remembered, he was advised by his mother to take in 1845. In his essay on "Hartley Coleridge," he quotes Keats' words in the Preface to *Endymion*, which, judging from his poems and passages in his letters, partially describes the phase he was at this time passing through. "The imagination of a boy is healthy, and the mature imagination of a man is healthy, but there is a space of life between, in which the soul is in a ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thick sighted."

Much might be written on the effects produced by contact with insanity; on the depressing reaction on the nervous system following the excitement, tension, and anxiety caused by it; of the distorted and exaggerated view many of the ordinary, commonplace circumstances of life are apt to take while the mind is suffering from such contact. Moreover, it creates a sort of double life. The habit of having always to exercise caution and discretion, always to have to look out for danger signals, while hiding what is uppermost in the thoughts, creates a condition in which the natural impulses get wired in by a hedge of reserve, and which prevents a free happy expansion natural in temperaments such as Walter Bagehot's. The uninitiated understand so little, the sore is so acutely sensitive, that an instinctive shrinking arises from challenging the best-intentioned sympathy. It is a painful subject, but in attempting a biography, sins of omission count as no less immoral than sins of commission. By omitting existing conditions of mind and circumstance, inadequate impressions must necessarily result. Walter Bagehot started in life with as high spirits, as healthy a temperament, and as sound an understanding as any human being ever possessed, and it is lamentable to trace how directly and indirectly his health and buoyancy were undermined by the pain, wear, and stress of the family calamity, by "The dark realities which are, as it were, the skeleton of our life, which seem to haunt us like a death's head". Although he weathered each storm that arose with affectionate discretion and courage, the cloud was ever there, hanging over his life, dimming the play of sunlight on it, suppressing that causeless, exultant happiness to which his natural temperament was prone, and which is the kindliest favour the fates can tender to youth.

Living alone in lodgings Bagehot felt the weight of this dark reality in its most depressing form. While at University College the companionship of other students suited his sociable leanings; and study under professors such as De Morgan, Long, Malden, and Hewitt Key, acted as an intellectual stimulant. When at home, though the agitations might be more acutely disturbing, there were alleviations not

found in the lonely lodgings in Great Coram Street. The devoted affection and wise counsel of his father, the charm of his mother's personality, Herd's Hill, which he loved, and the beauty of his native country, all tended to give a less cruel aspect to the tragedy; whereas the loneliness of his life in London accentuated it. The London he was then living in was an ugly London to him. He was keenly sensitive to the visible as connected with the invisible, and there was nothing in the London in which he then dwelt to feed, as at Herd's Hill, the leisure moments with the soothing delights of colour and atmosphere: nothing outward to uplift the spirits after the day's work, no visible stimulus to the poetic and spiritual aspirations which had been his from childhood. In after days, referring to this dreary time, he said he ought to have had a horse to ride, "that would have mended matters". Bagehot nevertheless would have scorned the idea of allowing himself to become a victim of anything approaching despair. "If you would vanquish earth, you must invent Heaven," he writes in his essay on Macaulay. "His real strength," as he said of Hartley Coleridge, "was in his own mind," and the force of his own mind was his defence against spectral scares, while he was already beginning to feel "the excitement or origination" as a stimulant against depression. From his father he inherited a singularly level-headed sense of duty, and strength of will to follow what conscience dictated. He was fully alive to the sensitiveness of his brain. "Though it be false and mischievous to speak of hereditary vice," he writes in the Hartley Coleridge essay, "it is most true and wise to observe the mysterious fact of hereditary temptation. Doubtless it is strange that the nobler emotions and the inferior impulses, their peculiar direction or their proportionate strength, the power of a fixed idea, that the inner energy of the very will, which seems to issue from the core of our complex nature and to typify, if anything does, the pure essence of the immortal soul, that these and such as these should be transmitted by material descent, as though they were an accident of the body, the turn of an eye-brow, or the feebleness of a joint, if this were not obvious, it would be as

amazing, perhaps more amazing than any fact which we know; it looks not only like predestinated, but even heritable election. But, explicable or inexplicable, to be wondered at or not wondered at, the fact is clear, tendencies and temptations are transmitted even to the fourth generation, both for good and for evil, both in those who serve God and in those who served Him not." Walter Bagehot was well aware that his nerves were sensitive and excitable, that his imagination often swept him off the solid groundwork, and that he could not, like his father, maintain the same patient equanimity of temperament in meeting the difficulties at home. He felt a sympathy with Wordsworth who used to say that he was "frequently so rapt into an unreal transcendental world of idea, that the external world seemed no longer to exist in relation to him, and he had to convince himself of its existence by *clasping a tree* or something that happened to be near him". Mr. Hutton says that Walter Bagehot had "the visionary nature to which the commonest things often seemed the most marvellous, and the marvellous things the most intrinsically probable," and he himself writes in "The First Edinburgh Reviewers": "A clear, precise, discriminating intellect shrinks at once from the symbolic, the unfounded, the indefinite. The misfortune is that mysticism is true. There certainly are kinds of truths, borne in as it were instinctively on the human intellect, most influential on the character and the heart, yet hardly capable of stringent statement difficult to limit by an elaborate definition. Their course is shadowy; the mind seems rather to have seen than to see them, more to feel after than definitely apprehend them. They commonly involve an infinite element, which of course cannot be stated precisely, or else a first principle, an original tendency, of our intellectual constitution, which it is impossible not to feel, and yet which it is hard to extricate in terms and words." These vaguer, mystical truths Walter Bagehot brought into the compass of his sense of reality. His imagination gave him the power so to pierce the mist that he could convey definitely in his writings the sense of the indefinite. His imagination carried him far into dreamlands, into the attitude of "Shakespeare's greatest dreamer, Hamlet," into

the philosophic speculations of Kant. "How," discusses Kant, "is Nature in general possible?" But Bagehot's imagination also brought him back on to firm ground. He discerned how disastrous is the result to those who indulge in feeding only on the pleasant pastures of dreamland. Of these he writes: "What is to fix such a mind, what is to strengthen it, to give it a fulcrum. To exert itself, the will, like the arm, requires to have an obvious and a definite resistance, to know where it is, why it is, whence it comes, and whither it goes." Life had to be lived, and to live it well was Bagehot's aim. Very favourite words of his were Shelley's:—

> Lift not the painted veil
> Which those who live call Life.

Bagehot's melancholy sonnets were written for himself and his friends, whereas the public was given matter of quite a different character. He entered the arena of authorship by two articles for the *Prospective Review*, which was then edited by his friend William Roscoe. The first alluded to in Mr. Hutton's letter was on Currency, written in 1847, the second, also for the *Prospective*, on John Stuart Mill, in 1848. He writes to Mr. Roscoe: "I am come to London in September to read Law and write a review of John Mill's *Pol. Ec.* for the *Prospective*. I have got a great reverence for my own virtue in consequence, and am in immense danger of doing nothing now I am here; one lives to reward merit. The fates seem to think or feel differently, however, as I am in much trouble about John Mill, who is very tough, and rather dreary. I am trying to discuss his views about the labouring classes. Most of his peculiar views come in there, and the subject is of more interest than any other that I could select. The theory of population is in an unpleasant state, and it is very difficult to find sure ground upon it. . . . It would be a charity to write to me, for London is dull, even to me, who am always a solitary animal."

After the article appeared, Mr. Hutton writes from Berlin: "I was much interested in your review of Mill. I didn't think, however, it was as able as your article on the Currency, and I find Martineau thinks so too. It follows Mill so much,

I am sorry you don't blow up Mill more. I should have thought there was more room for it, as to his theories respecting the future of the working classes, which you do allude to, but not at any length. The doctrine he urges so much about population I dislike extremely." Again referring to it, Mr. Hutton writes in another letter: "Your hatred to your article is quite possible; it is extremely clever, and will, I am sure, be very much admired. I only said *you* could write a better, but if I had read it first in the *Prospective* without knowing by whom it was, I should have been astonished and delighted with it."

To his mother Walter wrote cheerfully from London, never dwelling on his moods of depression. He chose subjects likely to amuse her, and interest the best part of her mind, though when he thought he might avert a crisis in her malady, he wrote without any reserve concerning it.

In December, 1847, he writes: "Mr. Stanley, Arnold's Biographer, has just brought out a volume of sermons and essays on the Apostolic age. I admire the sermons exceedingly. Mr. Stanley is a little man with grissly black hair, and piercing black eyes that look like a Jew's; very singular and clever looking. I went to a queer party at Newman's (Mr. Frank Newman, then Head of University Hall) a night or two ago. He manages a party worse than anybody I ever saw. A good many ladies and a good many gentlemen, but none of the gentlemen knew any of the ladies except Mr. Newman, and one gentleman who, being married, vigorously fought shy of his own wife. All the ladies worked dismally in a meek way; and the men talked politics and metaphysics in another room, Newman peering through the folding doors at the ladies, being afraid, I suppose, they would make a rush and swamp his proof 'that all philosophy began in nonsense'. I have been there once or twice before; but none of the parties was so queer as this one. The last time he talked to Smith Osler (there were about twenty people there) and myself, leaving the rest to shift for themselves."

From Oxford, while staying with his friend Constantine Prichard, Fellow of Balliol College, Bagehot writes:—

"My dear Mother,

"I am afraid the family will be wroth with me for not writing; but the philosophers take up so much of one's time and tire one so during the rest of it that really not writing is excusable. Prince Albert has just been exhibiting himself here in the Ethnological Section of the Association. Dr. Prichard and Chevalier Bunsen, and Dr. Latham went off about Ethnology, languages, ancient Egypt, etc., which the Prince tried hard to look as if he understood, but did not succeed completely. He was attended by Sir R. Inglis, who contrives to look knowing very well, and attends the sections as diligently as any philosopher of them all, though he most likely does not know much more about the matter than persevering ladies who sit all day in the Mathematical Section. Mr. Laverrier and Mr. Adams (the rival calculator of the position of the new Planet Neptune) are the great philosophical attractions. Mr. Adams is the best to look at a good deal, as Laverrier is a yellow-haired pink little man with invisible eyes, and *no* expression of face at all. Dr. Faraday is here, and gave a statement that they can now by recent discoveries turn diamonds into coke, but it does not seem that they can turn them back again; so that the jewellers will not suffer. Sir J. Hirschel is the most interesting of the physical philosophers, and I think the most attractive mentally of them all. The most interesting Oxford man whom I have met here is Mr. Stanley, the writer of Arnold's life. He is a son of the Bishop of Norwich whom I met at his rooms at breakfast the other morning. Ehrenberg the great animalcule finder is there; he looks rather like a squashed animalcule himself. The Bishop of Oxford preached yesterday at St. Mary's, the University Church. It happened curiously that yesterday was the day for an old bequest sermon on pride and the vanity of human knowledge; so that the physical philosophers kicked it in. The sermon was a good one on the whole, though too rhetorical for the Tractarians here who like plainness of speech. The Prichards are staying at Wallingford, and come in daily. The doctor slid off the platform during the rush of Prince Albert to a neighbouring corner. Bunsen's speech was to a

considerable extent an eulogism on the Doctor's Book. Ethnology is only a subsection of the British Association. You seem to doubt a little whether you shall come on Tuesday, to-morrow, in your last letter. However, I mean to return to-morrow, and to go to Hampstead in the evening to receive you. *Possibly* something very attractive may turn up here, and I may stay, but it is not likely at all.

"Believe me,

"Yours obediently, though in great haste,

"WALTER BAGEHOT."

Again from Oxford, while paying another visit to the Prichards, Bagehot writes:—

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"I reached Oxford in perfect safety on Monday evening. The Prichards were all well and expecting me. They seem fitted in very nicely here, much better than they ever were in London. I am going to stay here till to-morrow Friday, as I am going to dine at Oriel with one of the fellows there who is a great logician and very ugly to the eyes. The only great gun whom I have seen here that was new to me is Mr. Sewell, the moral philosopher and High Church divine. I cannot say I much admire his books, but he is indisputably a capital talker, not much like a divine but with some shrewdness and a good deal of terrestrial knowledge and a large fund of clever stories. He was the life and soul of a dinner party given to the Coleridges to which I was admitted."

Walter had studied the philosophy of Kant with great interest. He writes to his friend, Sir Edward Fry, in May, 1846: "I have been reading some of Kant the founder of the modern school of Metaphysics in Germany and France. He appears to me to have been a man of preternatural acuteness, no little confidence in himself, to have been very fond of the complexities of an artificial system, and to have been defective in the power of diffusing simplicity over a subject by the constant application of master-truths. However, he has greatly advanced study of mental philosophy, and to anyone who wishes to cultivate the power to acute discrimination his works

may be recommended as constantly requiring the exercise of that faculty. It is a great pity that he had so little power of explaining his meaning. His vast and barbarous terminology is enough to terrify any Englishman but one who, like myself, is a fanatical devotee in the service of metaphysics."

Mr. Hutton writes in his memoir: "Walter Bagehot took the gold medal in Intellectual and Moral Philosophy with his Master's degree in 1848, in reading for which he mastered for the first time those principles of political economy which were to receive so much illustration from his genius in later years". Bagehot's and Mr. Hutton's endeavours at this time to thresh out various points in theology and morals, were often started by the views held by Newman and Martineau. Mr. Hutton still retained the attitude of a pupil inspired by Walter Bagehot's superior genius. "I think you are right that it is impossible to conceive moral evil ever totally exterminated from a free world, there can only be a partial approach to it, leaving a constant quantity always there; at least so it seems to me. I recollect our first talk about an emotional God very well, and the exact place in the New Road where it took place; that is one of the many examples in which I have begun by violently contesting your opinions and learning to believe them at last. I believe I owe more to you in matters of philosophy and faith than to any number of individuals under the sun, Martineau *perhaps* excepted, but even here I am very doubtful."

Dr. Prichard died on 23rd December, 1848, at the age of seventy-two. Of him and his family, excepting always his Uncle and Aunt Reynolds, Walter Bagehot had seen more than of anyone outside his college life, both during the Bristol and London days. Through his son Constantine, Bagehot was first introduced to Arthur Clough, who resigned his fellowship of Oriel College, Oxford, in November, 1848. Francis Newman, having vacated the post of Principal of the University Hall, London, Mr. Clough was elected to it. Bagehot had expended time and money in establishing this Hall for residence in connection with University College, and it was through his and Mr. Roscoe's exertions that Mr. Clough was offered the Headship.

Walter Bagehot's health had broken down while he took his M.A. He was in so weak a state that he had to lean on a friend's arm when he went up to receive the gold medal. He revived at Herd's Hill, and returned to London in November, 1848, to read Law in the Chambers of Mr. Hall, afterwards Vice-Chancellor Sir Charles Hall.

It was during the two following years, when Arthur Clough held the post of Principal of University Hall, that Walter Bagehot and he saw most of each other. Mr. Hutton writes that Arthur Clough was "the man who had, I think, a greater intellectual fascination for Walter Bagehot than any of his contemporaries". Those who believe in inherited racial refinement and who take an interest in tracing it, would find if they did so that Arthur Clough and Walter Bagehot had alike that peculiar kind of refinement which nothing else appears to be able to confer; but on further inspection they might also have traced the influence of a class to which their nearer ancestors belonged, an influence which was advantageous, expanding, as it did, their view of life in various directions. Both their families were of ancient lineage, owners for many generations of large landed estates, the Cloughs in Wales, and the Bagehots in Gloucestershire, while both their more immediate ancestors had become merchants and bankers. Both, to use Walter's own words describing Clough, were men "of great honesty and moral courage, with an immense deal of feeling". Still, Arthur Clough appears hardly to have been the right man in the right place as Principal of University Hall. Mr. Hutton writes: "Bagehot did what he could to mediate between that enigma to Presbyterian parents, a College head who held himself serenely neutral on all moral and educational subjects interesting to parents and pupils except the observance of disciplinary rules, and the managing body who bewildered him and were by him bewildered. I don't think either Bagehot or Clough's other friends were very successful in their mediation, but Bagehot at least gained in Clough a cordial friend, and a theme of profound intellectual and moral interest to himself, which lasted him his life, and never failed to draw him into animated discussion long after

Clough's own premature death; and I think I can trace the effect which some of Clough's writings had on Bagehot's mind to the very end of his career."

What fascinated Bagehot first in Arthur Clough, was his singularly fine and fastidious taste in all moral and intellectual questions, combined with an "immense amount of feeling," and a pure and unselfish nature. Clough scrupulously refused to admit that anything could be admitted as certain so long as his mind was conscious of any flaw in the entire proving of it. As he writes: "Action will furnish belief; but will that belief be the true one? This is the point you know." It was a mind for ever weighing the pros and cons of every opinion, idea and belief, allied to singularly positive and intuitive instincts, while the poet's power in him could cast a charm over all his wavering uncertainties. Such a nature was an ever-fertile field of speculative interest to Bagehot. His poetry had a fascination for him; but while fully alive to, and sympathising with, Clough's perception of the mazes which entangle a mind in search for certainty—a mind at the same time sensible of the many-sided aspects truths can take—Walter Bagehot could emerge from the tangle into clear daylight, whereas Arthur Clough apparently remained in the dim twilight. Both started from the same disputable premises, but while Arthur Clough's judgment at the end remained suspended, Walter Bagehot brought the issue to a definite conclusion. An undetermined result sufficed for the poet, but did not suffice for the philosopher. Bagehot's mind worked with a force and an impetus which carried it through most problems. He had, to use his own words, "the latent impulse and 'secret vigour,' the invisible spirit which can only be demonstrated by trial and victory". We find these words in the article Bagehot wrote after Mr. Clough's death in the *National Review*, 1861, entitled "Mr. Clough's Poems". In describing Clough's class of mind he further writes: "There are, however, some minds (and of these Mr. Clough's was one) which will not accept what appears to be an intellectual destiny. They struggle against the limitations of mortality and will not condescend to use the natural and needful aids of human thought. They

will not *make their image*. They struggle after an 'actual abstract'. . . . You do not know how to describe these 'universal negatives' as they seem to be. They will not fall into place in the ordinary intellectual world anyhow. If you offer them any known religion they 'won't have that'; if you offer them no religion they will not have that either; if you ask them to accept a new and as yet unrecognised religion they altogether refuse to do so. They seem not only to believe in an 'unknown God,' but in a God whom no man can ever know. . . . Mr. Clough's fate in life had been to exaggerate this naturally peculiar temper. He was a pupil of Arnold's; one of his best, most susceptible and favourite pupils," and Bagehot proceeds to prove that Dr. Arnold's teaching was bad for him. "He required quite another sort of teaching; to be told to take things easily; not to try to be wise over much; to be 'something besides critical'; to go on living quietly and obviously, and see what truth would come to him. Mr. Clough had to his latest years what may be noticed in others of Arnold's disciples, a fatigued way of looking at great subjects. It seemed as if he had been put into them before his time, had seen through them, had been bored by them, and had come to want something else." Whatever Arthur Clough was or was not, however, he fascinated Walter Bagehot, and the two years in London when Mr. Clough was Principal of the University Hall, were made more bearable to Bagehot through constant companionship with him. Their friendship continued to the end of Mr. Clough's life. He had never cared for his work at University Hall, and resigned his post as Head in 1852, and offered himself as a candidate for the Principalship of a College at Sydney, but did not obtain it. Having formed a close friendship with Emerson during his visits to Europe, he left England for Boston in October, 1852. During his term of office at University Hall, "he gradually," writes his sister, Miss Clough, "formed some new and valuable friendships, among these his acquaintance with Mr. Carlyle was one of the most important". Another, certainly, was that with Walter Bagehot.

After reading Law for six months with Mr. Hall, Bagehot

changed his work and studied under Mr. Quain, afterwards Mr. Justice Quain, with whom in after years he continued very friendly relations. All kinds of study had a certain attraction for Walter Bagehot. He liked—to use his own words—"to play with his mind," and nearly every study, however difficult, took the form of an interesting game to him. At no time in his life does he seem to have come to a dead wall, or to an obstacle over which he could not vault, or round which he could not steer. It was never irksome to him to exercise the ingenuity and fertility of his brain. But, though liking both Sir Charles Hall and Justice Quain personally, the study of law *per se* had no attraction for him. In a sense it seemed to him a waste of time—it occupied without satisfying. It necessitated incessant attention and yet he did not feel it as sustaining or stimulating food. Though the days seemed crammed with work, there was a vacancy which left him a prey to depression. While the tide of life flowed apparently vigorously he found himself at times turning somewhere out of its rushing current, into a sort of back water in whose dreamy calm things were reflected, things belonging to the "truths whose course is shadowy," which "involve an infinite element," and "cannot be stated precisely". While studying law he felt these calmer, higher—half thoughts—half instincts, were being starved. The fine fabric of his brain was being usurped without being fully utilised.

Mr. Roscoe, the friend Bagehot saw most constantly at this time, likewise felt no enthusiasm for law as a profession, and early abandoned it. He gave the reasons why he did so in a letter to Mr. Hutton,[1] reasons which he doubtlessly fully discussed with Bagehot in conversation.

[1] "I have been thinking of my relinquishment of the Bar, and with more satisfaction, and more real conviction of the wisdom of the step, than I ever had before. I sincerely desire to lead a religious life, I would say I earnestly desire, but so far I have not advanced. But I have a profound conviction that to be in all things a child of God is the highest and ultimate object of life. All modes of life are to be looked at simply with reference to this object. I am far from thinking that a man ought to neglect the duties and opportunities of life, or even the higher pleasures which grace it; but a man must seek such a mode of life as in his own individual case

In March, 1851, Bagehot writes from Herd's Hill :—

"My dear Roscoe,

"Would you be so kind as to look for me at 'Rex V., The Churchwardens of Crossley,' 5 Adolphus and Ellis, page 10, and send me an account thereof. The point for which I want it, is of this sort. Under the 59 George the 3rd, chapter 134, churchwardens have a power to mortgage church-rates to obtain any sum they deem necessary for the repairs of the church, Vestry, Bishop and Incumbent thereto assenting. Now, some of my family being bankers, have been weak-minded enough to lend £1,000 or so, on such a security without requiring anybody to be personally liable. Everybody in the parish has quarrelled with everybody, and the security is

will most surely and safely make these things the stepping-stones to the highest end. My objections to the Bar are these : my health is so far from strong, that there is every probability that it would give way entirely under the unremitting exertions that a life at the Bar, if successful, would require. My memory is so feeble, and my power of accumulating knowledge so limited, and requires such express and repeated exertions to yield any fruit, that a lawyer's life would require from me a still more complete devotion and absorption than it does from the ordinary mass of successful practitioners. I see no adequate object to be gained by so complete a devotion. I once thought I might exercise a personal influence on those immediately around me, that I might find in being a 'religious lawyer' the highest and noblest usefulness. It was an ambition fondly cherished. Must I say now it was above my strength, above my nature? Must this be one of those great visions of youth which fade in the growing day of life? It might have been made a reality, or I might at least have died while striving to give it reality. It is no longer possible. I want energy and spring to cope with the labours, difficulties, and trials of a lawyer's life. I dare not put myself under temptations in which I feel too conscious I should fail. I could not master the business sufficiently not to be exposed to the temptation to petty untruthfulness in pretending to know more than I did ; sometimes I might sacrifice from incapacity interests entrusted to me. My vanity I dare not trust, nor my indolence ; and even granting the latter subdued, there is real want of strength and stamina. Were it otherwise, had I been faithful to my old aspirations, I see far greater difficulties in it than I once did. . . . In fine, I dare not face the temptations. I should be obliged, if I wished for any success, to devote my mind so completely, that it would be narrowed to one thing ; and I fear the religious meditation which I so absolutely need, if I am to emerge into light, would never be attained."

not forth-coming. By the deed of mortgage the money was to be paid by six instalments beginning in '46. In fact they only paid the first instalment and the first year's interest and then quarrelled and the vestry or majority thereof refused to make any rate and the churchwardens and minority made one which they can't get paid and the validity of which is being contested up at Wells in the Spiritual court. This was in '48 and since then they have made no rates whatever, and the mortgagees have had nothing. They now imagine that it would have a good moral effect, if they went for a mandamus to the churchwardens to make the rate. Montague Smith whose opinion they took rather throws cold water on them and seems to say that the aforesaid case decides that each instalment should be paid annually when due and that the mortgagee loses his money, if he does come *that very year* for a mandamus to get a rate made, and if possible collected. I confess this strikes me as monstrous. I can understand that Lord Denman may have held, say as against a parishioner, that the proper mode of managing the parochial business was to make and levy annual rates to discharge annual liabilities, but I can't fancy that a mortgagee is to lose his money unless he applies to Q.B. the very moment it becomes due. John Lord Campbell will look at that, I think. In this very case the mortgagee simply waited because the validity of the rate actually made being contested, they thought it useless to compel others to be made in the same form. They may be wrong in this very likely but I can't think they deserve on that account to be mulcted of their money. No rates could *now* be made except by mandamus as the parish churchwarden sticks out and refuses, but I think the farmers would pay a rate that the Q.B. directed to be made. I should therefore be immensely obliged if you would tell me about this 'anomalous' case which seems to me very hard, as I rather back up my family to go for a mandamus on the general principle of going ahead when you have the moral merits with you and also on Notteram's rule 'Bagehot always recommends proceedings'. It is a happy case altogether, they got one suit on for judgment in the Bishop's court when the Defendant malic-

iously *died* and of *course* the suit abates and it will take several years apparently to work another up to the same critical point. Brilliant system altogether church-rate law. I recommend Main's being sent in for a mandamus and hope to carry it. I believe (this case excepted) they would win and there does not seem to be anything even in the objections taken to the rate which has been made, but it isn't easy to get the money for all that—so out of the suavity of your disposition tell us about Lord Denman's decision. He muddled a good deal in his time. I shall be up this day week, and have settled to go into equity. I couldn't live cheerfully down here, and though I regret immensely that I ever opened a law book, I must stick to London now come what may, and I am sure of enough to live on, in any case.

"Ever yours,

"W. BAGEHOT.

"I am responsible for some delay in sending you the account of *Violenzia*, for which I apologise. My old landlady had a really profound idea that it was too big for foreign postage."

Violenzia was a tragedy Mr. Roscoe had written. He was abroad at this time and Bagehot and Hutton undertook to correct proofs and see the publisher for him.

From Great Coram Street, Bagehot writes :—

"MY DEAR ROSCOE,

"I send you the final proofs of *Violenzia*. I received yesterday from R. H. H. (Mr. Hutton) the Preface which I have sent to Parker. I read it with much interest and like the Sonnet and what you say of the play, exceedingly. I suppose it is true and it is certainly excellently said ; but I altogether object to the introduction of Kossuth and the Hungarian refugees. I can't see that they have anything to do with the matter in hand. If it appeared on affidavit that Ethel was a Magyar, and the king an Austrian, no doubt there would be a connection, and I would strongly advise the introduction of this link. And seriously I think a dedication—still more a dedication requiring an argumentative defence—should have *some*

reference to the matter in hand, and this plainly has not, and will strike readers, at least it did me, with alarm and consternation. Moreover you can't afford space enough to give the real reasons for your opinion, and I doubt whether it is very accordant with that superexcellent taste for which you, —, —, to give a more *obiter dictum* on a point whereon the public mind is so divided. This should only be done when the writer has shown, by his familiarity with kindred topics or otherwise that he knows more of the matter than his readers. Now it does not appear from this play that you know anything about Hungary, it *does* appear that you know a good deal about *women*, but perhaps there is no necessary connection in these cognitions. I don't think opinions of this sort much affect the public, there is a national feeling against convictions which a man is very eager to express, they are to be suspected.

"Yours ever speaking plainly,

"W. BAGEHOT."

CHAPTER VII.

PARIS.

DURING the year 1851, matters had been going from bad to worse with Bagehot. With the usual knack he had of knowing what was the best thing to do under difficulties, in the August of that year he flies off to Paris ostensibly to perfect himself in the French language, but more exactly in order to change the mental atmosphere. He had the good luck to come in for a Revolution. Mr. Roscoe, by a small kindness, had helped him to take this step, and Bagehot writes to him from Paris: "I was very unwell mentally and bodily when I came here. I had a good deal to put me out. Everything of all kinds had gone wrong with me for a long time, and there were some family matters which much annoyed me besides, so I was in a very weak-minded state and what you did for me was a real satisfaction just then, and I am very *much* obliged to you. I am much obliged also to Sanford for putting in my letter which is a queer thing I fancy.[1] Please to tell him to send me a copy. There is no difficulty. I have half written another which I will send you next week, as soon as I have read over the other. I am rather full on the subject—perhaps in error—as my maxim just now is that a man's *favourite* ideas are always wrong. But there are moments of truth about my view that I should not have known if I had been in England, and may be good for other people in consequence. I confine my immorality to speculation, and to the perusal of De Béranger who is really a great poet."

Some years previously Bagehot's mother had visited Paris with her brother, Mr. Vincent Stuckey. While there she had

[1] First letter on the *Coup d'État* which Mr. Sanford, the editor, inserted in the *Enquirer*.

annexed a pink silk bonnet which she enjoyed for several years, and a pretty china clock which still lives at Herd's Hill. She had gone into society and had made special friends with a French family, Meynieux by name, who welcomed Walter as the son of the lady they had "idolised".

"41, Rue de Vangirard,
"20*th October*, 1851.

"My dearest Mother,

"I have not heard from you for a long time but I suppose that you will write to me soon. Your friend Madame Meynieux desired to be remembered to you with such exceeding vigour that it seems a plain duty to put her affection in the very front of my letter. I had the honour of dining with her some days ago, and she made a really splendid panegyric on her 'bien ancienne amie' as she calls you (antiquity of course being your line) for the benefit of a stout and impressive French lady to whom she was introducing me. She stated that a few centuries back when she had the pleasure of knowing you she had been of all your many 'idolateurs' and 'idolatrices' by far the greatest. I was fumbling for a Christian answer to this heathenish sentiment and feebly striving to be agreeable to the French lady aforesaid, when I was surprised to hear, in a voice that seemed familiar to me, 'Hullo, I say, Bagehot'. It turned out to be a legal friend of mine, Adams by name, who in his surprise at seeing me very nearly overturned Monsieur Meynieux (a round man fit to bowl with) who was advancing with numerous bows to receive him. I admire your old friend exceedingly.

"There is rather an interesting crisis in politics here just now. Prince Louis has changed his tack and his ministers won't change with him. The whole object and idea of his present policy is to secure the Revision of the article of the Constitution which renders him ineligible at the next Presidential Election. This is rather a self-seeking end for the head of a great nation, but he has this excuse that the country really wish him to remain where he is, and all the better sort of people are ready to revise the constitution in order to keep him. Some of this attachment he owes to the good sense and

the strength of character which in the main he has shown during his time of office, but much to the general spirit of timidity and depression which is the general sentiment here in the middle and especially in the commercial classes. Anybody who is in will be supported by people who dread any change and live by the mercantile credit that Revolutions are certain to destroy. On this account I think the President has a very good chance of beating, though the legal difficulties imposed by the constitution are very great. It required three-fourths of the assembly to consent to the revision and there is an organised opposition, partly Socialistic and partly factious which is about, or rather more than a fourth, and which won't hear of it at any price. The present plan is to break up this opposition by proposing the repeal of a certain electoral law which requires three years' continuous residence in a district before you can gain a vote there. There is a good law enough in itself, but perhaps scarcely wise here now. The only sort of institution for which the Red Republicans have any respect is Universal Suffrage and unless it could be really and substantially allowed it seems unwise to tamper with it and weaken the attachment to the one constitution which can really pretend to any. It is hardly consistent also with the Constitution of which Universal Suffrage is a main feature. However, this may be the offer to the Red Republican opposition that he will consent to the abolition of this law if they will on their side consent to the revision. Lamartine who is now from personal grounds in opposition, Emile de Girardin, a sort of French Cobbett, the head of the newspaper world, and a member of the Assembly, are all ready to consent to this compromise. But it is yet doubtful whether the law of election can be repealed, or whether if repealed, enough of the opposition would be willing to vote for the Revision. 'The board has not determined on the result of what has taken place.' But there is a general impression that somehow or other the President will win, whether by removing or quashing the technical difficulties is to be seen. The present constitution is not liked, and the Republic is felt to be rather a lame and impotent conclusion after being introduced with so great a

flourish of trumpets four years ago. The ouvriers use the phrase *Vous avez diné sur la Republique*—'You've been and dined on the Republique' as equivalent to the Anglican compliment 'What a muff *you* are'.

"Yours affectionately,
"W. BAGEHOT."

Bagehot visited among others, Madame Mohl, whose *salon* was the *rendez-vous* of notable people from all countries, and who he was destined to see often in later years. He wrote accounts to his mother of his social successes and failures, the most amusing being a description of his attempts to waltz, an art which he never mastered, as he became giddy before any serious instruction could be made available.

"PARIS, *October*, 1851.
"*Friday Evening.*

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"I have added what *I* call waltzing to my other accomplishments. It differs from what other people call by that name, not only in the step which is of my own invention, but also in its having no relation whatever to the music, and by preserving its rotatory motion in a great measure by collisions with the other couples. It's very amusing running small French girls against some fellow's elbow, it's like killing flies years ago. There is, however, the inconvenience that one does not like to ask the same girl twice; she might say she had not insured her life, but if you are careful to select a fresh subject for each experiment, the pastime will succeed. I do not fancy it pleases the girls; he dances *tout seul* ('all by himself') I heard one of them say with great indignation to her female friends, as if a fellow of my age could be expected to keep time with her or with the music either, and it pleases me, it being a new, if not humane excitement, and is better than talking feeble philosophy in out of the way corners.

"People here take great interest in Lord Palmerston's retirement. The minister for foreign affairs is here, in general, the first minister; he was so always in Louis Philippe's time, though in consequence of the domestic confusion the minister of the Interior (the Home Secretary in our nomenclature) has

naturally cut him out, and they know nothing of Lord John Russell scarcely, and wonder at his having the power to turn out Lord Palmerston who has been their *bête noir* for years and whom they fancied was omnipotent. The reason seems to be that he and Lord John got in a rage and the Queen cut up rough (hard phrase that to do into French) for they don't really seem to differ much about Louis Napoleon, so I expound this, but the expression of my auditors is still puzzled. 'You don't explain it to me' as Brother would say. Of course they are too polite to impute the difficulty to my mode of expression (they only cut you up afterwards like a rotten potato) but ascribe it all to the complicated wheel-within-wheel nature of the English constitution."

Writing to his father and mother, Bagehot describes what he saw of the revolution of December, 1851 :—

"PARIS, *5th December*, 1851.

"MY DEAREST FATHER,

"I forgot the electric telegraph and thought that my note would be the first or about the first intelligence that you would receive of the new Revolution. Wednesday was extremely quiet, unnaturally so almost, and everybody seemed to stand in the streets to know as soon as might be what would turn up; however, no one seemed to like to stay still in any place for fear that something of great importance might have happened or be happening somewhere else. I assisted in the evening at a great gathering in the Boulevards, and a man whose name I could not learn read a paper announcing the *déchéance* of the President, but the appearance of a very few soldiers sent the swarm in all directions, for they were mere peaceful citizens or curious foreigners, and had no fighting aptitude. Altogether the characteristic of that day was exactly what Lord Byron in some letter calls '*qui*et inquietude'.

"Yesterday, Thursday, the *Coup d'État* you will remember was on Tuesday, was much more disturbed, the Paris Royal was closed, and a formidable notice was affixed to all the walls informing all persons that the 'enemies of order' had begun their operations. Being curious to see their tactics, I immediately hied to the Boulevard St. Martin which I fancied would

be the centre of operations, for it is in the narrow streets leading out of that great thoroughfare that the most 'exalted' of the *ouvriers* are said to reside. I had not been misinformed, for as soon as I got on the ground, the preparations for barricades were immediately visible. It is a simple process, though there being no paving stones on the Boulevards was a difficulty, but the stones of a half-built house supplied the place excellently well for the one where I was. These with palings, iron rails, planks, etc., and three overturned omnibuses and two upset cabs completed the bulwark. It took about half an hour to make nine, as the Boulevards are about there very wide, but others especially in the side streets were run up much more rapidly. The people making them were of two very unlike sorts. Immensely the greater number were mere boys or lads, *gamins* is the technical word, the lower sort of shopboys and sons of the better artisans, not bad-looking young fellows at all, liking the fair, and in general quite unarmed. Beside these and directing them were a few old stagers who have been at it these twenty years—men whose faces I do not like to *think* of —yellow, sour, angry, fanatical, who would rather shoot you than not. Each barricade that I saw was constructed under the eye of one or two, not more, of such fellows; the most of them do not, I was told, show until the building is over and the fighting begins. They were implicitly obeyed; indeed, a man must have a great deal of pluck not to do as they said, for they were armed, and a trifle bigoted in their temper. These (Montagnards is their name technically) I very studiously avoided, but I asked a question or two of some of the young fellows, and found that they thought that all the *troups* were out of Paris, that the provinces—Lyons especially —were rising, and that all the military would be wanted to prevent their march on the capital. It was likely enough that there was a row at Lyons, but not likely from the distance that they could yet be at the gates of Paris. Why the *troups* did not come I do not know, but for I suppose a couple of hours the barricade-people had it all their own way, and erected I think five in that part of the Boulevards, one after another, with about a hundred yards between them. I scrambled over

two and got as far as I dared towards the centre. The silence was curious: on the frontier a raging though industrious multitude, within the kingdom no one, a woman hurrying home, an old man shrugging his shoulders, all as quiet as the grave. I did not stay long in the inside, as I feared the *troups* would come and I might be shot that Napoleon might rule the French or some Montagnard might be so kind as to do it just to keep his hand in. The moment the barricades were done, they began to break into the shops and houses, not to rob but for arms. As soon as they were satisfied there was no more weapons to be had, they chalked 'death to robbers' or something of that sort on the shutters and went away. I should not think they stole sixpenny worth of any matter except powder and guns. The Montagnards would have shot any young fellow that tried it on. I tried hard to hire a window to see the capture of the fortress as well as its erection but this was not to be, for everybody said they meant to shut their windows and indeed it would not have been very safe to look out on them firing. I therefore retired, though not too quickly. It is a bad habit to run in a Revolution, somebody may think you are the 'other side' and shoot at you, but if you go calmly and look English, there is no particular danger. As I retired I met the *troups* at some distance, slowly and cautiously hemming in the insurgents. Anybody might go out who would but no one come in. The whole operation reminded me very much of the description of the Porteous mob in the *Heart of Midlothian.* If you will read over that again you will have the best idea of the thoroughbred Parisian *émeute* that I know. There is the same discipline, order, absence of plunder, and in the leaders the same deep hatred and fanaticism. I am pleased to have had an opportunity of seeing it *once* but once is enough, as there is, I take it, a touch of sameness in this kind of sight, and I shall not go again into the citadel of operation. In no other part is there any danger for a decently careful person. To-day is much quieter. The *troups* soon cleared my barricade, though I heard cannon and musketry, the latter in plenty, and there was blood and a good deal of it in the approachable parts of the Boulevards; the field of the

hardest battle was not to be approached for soldiers. I have not got time for a word more. You will have better accounts in the English papers than we have here. Only those of the Government are allowed to appear and these I know from the description of what I saw are written to tranquillise the provinces and diminish the disorder much. However, my notion is that the President will hold his own. Many thanks to my Mother for her note and also for your letter—I will write in a day or two.

"Yours ever,

"W. BAGEHOT."

"41, RUE DE VANGIRARD,
"PARIS.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

". . . When I have not got this Parisian complaint —for everybody now has at least a bad cold here—I am extremely well, quite stout, gross and ruddy. I lost three parties by being ill last week, to one of which, I believe, a big one, your friend Madame Meynieux was to have chaperoned me. However, I observe that dances like wheelbarrows are much the same in all countries, and nowhere propitious to people too muffish to waltz. One has to fall back on elderly creatures and express edifying sentiments in bad grammar. Not having 'been any place' as Watty used to say, I have not got anything to tell you. Politics are as dull as ditch-water here now after the excitement, the only new thing is decree of banishment apparently for life against some socialists of note, and of temporary exile against M. Thiers and the African generals, and Madame de Girardin, the great journalist, and others. The African generals are much to be pitied, I think, for they are a fine race of men; the list of exiles is thought numerous, I think, even by the President's friends—at least the people on his side whom I have happened to hear of —of course his enemies say there never was such 'tyranny' or oppression since the commencement of mankind. The Constitution hangs fire, that he may have more time to fill up the Consultative Commission—his privy Council, as he wants to

get all the creditable names he can. I will write again in a day or two when I am less stupid and have more to say.

"Yours most affectionately,

"W. BAGEHOT.

"*P.S.*—I was very sorry to hear of poor Mr. Spark's death whose mild manners and valuable qualities everybody I think respected. What a horrid loss of the Amazon, the French papers live and thrive on it since the *coup d'état*, except the government organs; they are at low life, and obliged to criticise old prima donnas and 'fill their columns' with accounts of the state of the *Navy*, pleasant reading that, careful deportations on old copy.

"My love universally."

"*7th December*, 1851,
"*Sunday.*

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"At this moment Paris is as tranquil as a tea-party, at any rate to the eye. The barricaders have been quashed, and *according to me* there will be no more fighting of consequence for some days and it may be for some months. I do not think it possible for a populace to rise with bayonets so close upon them; the Government have as yet been very determined, cruel and bloody according to their enemies, and I cannot imagine that if they continue to pursue the same policy there can be any insurrection of importance; but no one can know this. The Montagnards *may* turn desperate, but they are much broken, their best leaders being in prison and in London. I wish for the President decidedly myself as against M. Thiers and his set in the Parliamentary World; even *I* can't believe in a Government of barristers and newspaper editors, and also as against the Red party who, though not insincere, are too abstruse and theoretical for a plain man. It is easy to say what they would abolish, but horribly hard to say what they would *leave*, and what they would *find*. I am in short what they call here a *réactionnair*, and I think I am with the majority—a healthy habit for a young man to contract. M. Bein whom I live with said to me, 'I do not approve of this violence and *coup d'état*, but I am for

the President because he's for "the tranquillity"'. People want to be let alone; it is clear that the Republic has been *burgled*, and if the President were turned out no one knows who would come in. For the moment, the alternative is between him and the Socialists. How long he may last is another question. Your friend Madame Meynieux pitched into his private character yesterday at a great pace. She was arguing with a French lady whom I did not know. I have never heard two people talk so fast and so well at the same time. M. Meynieux and myself looked on open-mouthed and in perfect silence. I could not talk that pace in English, much less in French, where I require five minutes to express four ideas. I listened patiently for a long time. The French lady was for the President and your friend violently against. She is allied with some of the Parliamentary people whom he has knocked about. She professes to be a Socialist but *not* a Republican; on the contrary she disdains forms of government and is exclusively strong on the principle of 'association'. I can't tell you, for I do not know, *who* is to associate with *whom?* She don't approve at all of the common Red Socialist, indeed the weak point of the system is that no Socialist will ever associate with any other; all I know is that, as they say in the kitchen, somebody is to 'keep company' with somebody. M. Meynieux didn't seem so strong on that, he is a man with good notions of food but not much general ability, though jolly, and awake to the existing world. *His* idea was that if he said anything on the Boulevards, he might be 'had up' for it, which he didn't like. However, in fact, people say what they please, and your friend did not please to spare the President. Don't suppose society here is at an end. People eat their meals—the shops are open. Rachel is to play to-morrow. But of course there is uneasiness, great uneasiness, though as my Father will have observed the funds keep up miraculously. The English papers all stopped today. I do not know if there is row in the provinces which we are not to hear about. That would floor the Government, at least if they had to withdraw troops from Paris."

It was in Paris, in the letters on the *Coup d'État* which he

sent to his friend Mr. Sanford for insertion in *The Enquirer* that Bagehot "found himself" as an author.

After referring to Burke, President Woodrow Wilson writes of these letters:—

"Bagehot showed the same precocious power, and saw clearly at twenty-five as at fifty, though he did not see as much or hold his judgment at so nice a balance. There is full evidence of this in the seven remarkable letters on the third Napoleon's *Coup d'État*, which he wrote from Paris while he was yet a law student. They are evidently the letters of a young man. Their style goes at a spanking, reckless gait that no older mind would have dared attempt or could have kept its breath at. Their satirical humour has a quick sting in it; their judgments are offhand and unconscionably confident; their crying heresies in matters of politics are calculated to shock English nerves very painfully. They are aggressive and a bit arrogant. But their extravagance is superficial. At heart they are sound, and even wise. The man's vision for affairs has come to him already. He sees that Frenchmen are not Englishmen, and are not to be judged, or very much aided either, by English standards in affairs. You shall not elsewhere learn so well what it was that happened in France in the early fifties, or why it happened, and could hardly have been staved off or avoided. 'You have asked me to tell you what I think of French affairs,' he writes. 'I shall be pleased to do so; but I ought perhaps to begin by cautioning you against believing, or too much heeding, what I say.' It is so he begins, with a shrewd suspicion, no doubt, that the warning is quite unnecessary. For he was writing to the editor of *The Enquirer*, a journal but just established for the enlightenment of Unitarian dissenters—a people Bagehot had reason to know, and could not hope to win either to the matter or to the manner of his thought. They were sure to think the one radically misleading and erroneous, and the other unpardonably flippant. But it was the better sport on that account to write for their amazement. He undertook nothing less bold than a justification of what Louis Napoleon had done in flat derogation and defiance of the constitutional

liberties of France. He set himself to show an English audience, who he knew would decline to believe it, how desperate a crisis had been averted, how effectual the strong remedy had been, and how expedient at least a temporary dictatorship had become. 'Whatever other deficiencies Louis Napoleon may have,' he said, 'he has one excellent advantage over other French statesmen: he has never been a professor, nor a journalist, nor a promising barrister, nor by taste a *littérateur*. He has not confused himself with history; he does not think in leading articles, in long speeches, or in agreeable essays. He has very good heels to his boots, and the French just want treading down, and nothing else—calm, cruel, business-like oppression, to take the dogmatic conceit out of their heads. The spirit of generalisation which, John Mill tells us, honourably distinguishes the French mind has come to this, that every Parisian wants his head *tapped* in order to get the formulæ and nonsense out of it. . . . So I am for any carnivorous Government.' Conscious of his audacity and of what will be said of such sentiments among the grave readers of *The Enquirer*, he hastens in his second letter to make his real position clear. 'For the sake of the women who may be led astray,' he laughs, affecting to quote St. Athanasius, 'I will this very moment explain my sentiments.'

"He is sober enough when it comes to serious explanation of the difficult matter. Laughing satire and boyish gibe are put aside, and a thoughtful philosophy of politics—Burke's as well as his own—comes at once to the surface, in sentences admirably calm and wise. In justifying Napoleon, he says plainly and at the outset, he is speaking only of France and of the critical circumstances of the year 1852. 'The first duty of society,' he declares, 'is the preservation of society. By the sound work of old-fashioned generations, by the singular painstaking of the slumberers in churchyards, by dull care, by stupid industry, a certain social fabric somehow exists; people contrive to go out to their work, and to find work to employ them actually until the evening; body and soul are kept together,—and this is what mankind have to show for their six

thousand years of toil and trouble.' You cannot better the living by political change, he maintains, unless you contrive to hold change to a slow and sober pace, quiet, almost insensible, like that of the evolutions of husbanding growth. If you cannot do that, perhaps it is better to hold steadily to the old present ways of life, under a strong, unshaken, unquestioned government, capable of guidance and command. 'Burke first taught the world at large,' he reminds us, 'that politics are made of time and place; that institutions are shifting things, to be tried by and adjusted to the shifting conditions of a mutable world; that in fact politics are but a piece of business to be determined in every case by the exact exigencies of that case,—in plain English, by sense and circumstances. This was a great step in political philosophy, though it *now* seems the events of 1848 have taught thinking persons (I fancy) further: they have enabled us to see that of all these circumstances so affecting political problems, by far and out of all question the most important is *national character*. I need not prove to you that the French have a national character,' he goes on, 'nor need I try your patience with a likeness of it: I have only to examine whether it be a fit basis for natural freedom. I fear you will laugh when I tell you what I conceive to be about the most essential mental quality for a free people whose liberty is to be progressive, permanent, and on a large scale: it is much *stupidity*. I see you are surprised; you are going to say to me, as Socrates did to Polus, "My young friend, of course you are right; but will you explain what you mean? As yet you are not intelligible."'

"The explanation is easily made, and with convincing force. He means that only a race of steady, patient, unimaginative habits of thought can abide steadfast in the conservative and businesslike conduct of Government, and he sees the French to be what De Tocqueville had called them,—a nation apt to conceive a great design, but unable to persist in its pursuit, impatient after a single effort, 'swayed by sensations, and not by principles,' her 'instincts better than her morality'. 'As people of "large roundabout common sense" will as a rule somehow get on in life,' says Bagehot, 'no matter what their

circumstances or their fortune, so a nation which applies good judgment, forbearance, a rational and compromising habit, to the management of free institutions will certainly succeed; while the more eminently gifted national character will be but a source and germ of endless and disastrous failure, if, with whatever other eminent qualities, it be deficient in these plain, solid, and essential requisites.' It is no doubt whimsical to call 'large roundabout common sense,' good judgment, and rational forbearance 'stupidity'; but he means, of course, that those who possess these solid practical gifts usually lack that quick, inventive originality and versatility in resource which we are apt to think characteristic of the creative mind. 'The essence of the French character,' he explains, 'is a certain mobility; that is, a certain "excessive sensibility to present impressions," which is sometimes "levity" for it issues in a postponement of seemingly fixed principles to a momentary temptation or a transient whim; sometimes "impatience" as leading to an exaggerated sense of existing evils; often "excitement," a total absorption in existing emotion; oftener "inconsistency," the sacrifice of old habits to present emergencies,' —and these are qualities which, however engaging upon occasion, he is certainly right in regarding as a very serious, if not fatal, impediment to success in self-government. 'A real Frenchman,' he exclaims, 'can't be stupid: *esprit* is his essence; wit is to him as water, *bonsmots* as *bonsbons*.' And yet 'stupidity,' as he prefers to call it, is, he rightly thinks, 'nature's favourite resource for preserving steadiness of conduct and consistency of opinion: it enforces concentration; people who learn slowly learn only what they must."

"This, which reads like the moral of an old man, is what Bagehot saw at twenty-six; and he was able, though a youth and in the midst of misleading Paris, to write quick sentences of political analysis which were fit to serve both as history and as prophecy. 'If you have to deal with a mobile, a clever, a versatile, and intellectual, a dogmatic nation,' he says, 'inevitably and by necessary consequence you will have conflicting systems; every man speaking his own words, and giving his own suffrage to what seems good in his own eyes; many

holding to-day what they will regret to-morrow; a crowd of crotchety notions and a heavy percentage of philosophical nonsense; a great opportunity for subtle stratagem and intriguing selfishness; a miserable division among the friends of tranquillity, and a great power thrown into the hands of those who, though often with the very best intentions, are practically and in matter of fact opposed both to society and civilisation. And moreover, besides minor inconveniences and lesser hardships, you will indisputably have periodically—say three or four times in fifty years—a great crisis: the public mind much excited; the people in the streets swaying to and fro with the breath of every breeze; the discontented *ouvriers* meeting in a hundred knots, discussing their real sufferings and their imagined grievances with lean features and angry gesticulations; the Parliament all the while in permanence, very ably and eloquently expounding the whole subject, one man proposing this scheme, and another that; the opposition expecting to oust the ministers and ride in on the popular commotion, the ministers fearing to take the odium of severe or adequate repressive measures, lest they should lose their salary, their places, and their majority; finally a great crash, a disgusted people overwhelmed by revolutionary violence, or seeking a precarious, a pernicious, but after all a precious protection from the bayonets of military despotism.'"

Could you wish a better analysis of the affairs of that clever, volatile people, and can you ascribe it wholly to his youth that Bagehot should in 1852 have deliberately concluded that "the first condition of good Government" in France was "a really strong, a reputedly strong, a continually strong executive power"?

Paris and the writing of these *Coup d'État* articles had effected the cure. Walter Bagehot returned from Paris in 1852, refreshed, braced, and determined. He went to Herd's Hill, discussed his future with his father, and when back in London, wrote to him:—

"9 Spring Gardens,
"31*st August*, 1852.

"My dearest Father,

"I have been considering carefully the question which we almost decided upon when I was at home. I mean my abandoning the law at the present crisis—and in accordance with what we very nearly resolved upon when I was with you,—I have decided to do so at this juncture—utterly and for ever."

CHAPTER VIII.

AUTHOR AND BANKER.

BAGEHOT ate his dinners, was called to the Bar, promptly abandoned law as a profession, and settled at Herd's Hill to learn business with his father. As he writes to his father, his mother had "long been inclining to my giving up the law". When writing to him, she had urged health as a reason; but, reading between the lines, he knew that she longed for his presence at home. Also he was becoming more and more conscious of the fertile crop of ideas germinating in his brain, and of the impulse he felt, ever growing stronger, to express them in writing. He had acquired a footing on the ladder of authorship with the articles on Currency and on John Stuart Mill, published in the *Prospective Review;* he had sprung boldly ahead in the letters on the *Coup d'État,* escaping once and for all from what was expected of him in Unitarian circles, and he was more than ever aware on returning to London from Paris, that the practice of law was incompatible with literature, though he never for a moment thought of making literature his avowed profession.

He was still much interested in University College and the University Hall, and the influence of college life on the future career of students. This inspired him to write an article on Oxford which was published in 1852 in the August number of the *Prospective Review.*[1] He had great doubts as to the merit of this article.

After the article appeared he wrote:—

"I think that my article on Oxford has got off extremely

[1] When editing the republished essays by Bagehot, Mr. Hutton omitted a considerable portion of the "Oxford"; but in the forthcoming complete edition of Bagehot's works, the whole of the essay will be found as originally printed.

well. I should very much like to write for you an article on Hartley Coleridge, a review of the edition of his *Biographia Borealis* recently brought out. I am rather strong on him myself, as I was an admirer before his death and renovation. I am rather afraid his 'poems' were reviewed in the *Prospective* not very long ago, and I don't know whether you would think it desirable to have any second article on him or them so soon, but if you could strain a point for us, I should like to write it very much indeed. It would not be a long article—about thirty pages. I should make it an estimate of him as a whole—though including of course a criticism on his poetry—and elucidating him by his father."

Though doubt might exist in Bagehot's own mind and in Mr. Hutton's as to the merit of the essay on Oxford, there could be none as to that on Hartley Coleridge. If a selection were made to prove the truth of Mr. Augustine Birrell's assertion that Bagehot was a writer who could be known by his writings, this estimate of Hartley Coleridge would surely take a foremost place. Mr. Hutton writes in the memoir: "In the essay on 'Hartley Coleridge'—perhaps the most perfect in style of any of his writings—he describes most powerfully, and evidently in great measure from his own experience, the mysterious confusion between appearances and realities which so bewildered little Hartley". He wrote this essay quickly while engrossed in the charm of his subject and insisted on it being published at once. It appeared in the October number of the *Prospective Review*. It proves that the space of life which Keats believes to exist between the healthy imagination of the boy and the mature and healthy imagination of the man had now been traversed, and that Bagehot's matured individuality as an author had asserted itself. He had not only *found himself* but knew that he had found himself. In describing the kind of poetry which he names as the *self-delineative*, he writes: "The first requisite of this poetry is truth. It is, in Plato's phrase, the soul 'itself by itself' aspiring to view and take account of the particular notes and marks that distinguish it from all other souls. The sense of reality is necessary to excellence; the poet being himself,

speaks like one who has authority; he knows and must not deceive." Walter Bagehot in those lines has stated his creed—a creed which dominated all his beliefs, guided his perception, and controlled his action. The soul "itself by itself" must allow of no delusions, no prejudices, no fond fancies which thwart the true direct line of sight. He saw the necessity of this all the more distinctly in his own case, because he perceived the force of his imagination. Walter Bagehot is not only great as an essayist—he may truly be said to stand alone. Though he deals with grave problems and high conceptions, yet the way these are treated by him is so natural and easy, that, however wise, his writing is never ponderous. We are stimulated rather than overweighted by their serious worth. Moreover, he plays with his acquired and wide knowledge with the same vitality with which he plays with his own original ideas —with the same humour, the same buoyancy of spirit.

"Hartley Coleridge," he writes, "was not like the Duke of Wellington. Children are urged by the example of the great statesman and warrior just departed—not indeed to neglect 'their book' as he did—but to be industrious and thrifty; 'always to perform business,' to 'beware of procrastination,' 'never to fail to do their best': good ideas, as may be ascertained by referring to the masterly despatches on the Mahratta transactions. 'Great events,' as the preacher continues, 'which exemplify the efficacy of diligence even in regions where the very advent of our religion is as yet but partially made known.' But

> What a wilderness were this sad world
> If man were always man and never child!

And it were almost a worse wilderness if there were not some to relieve the dull monotony of activity, who are children through life, who act on wayward impulse, and whose will has never come, who toil not and who spin not, who always have 'fair Eden's simpleness': and of such was Hartley Coleridge. 'Don't you remember,' writes Gray to Horace Walpole, 'when Lord B. and Sir H. C. and Viscount D., who are now great statesmen, were little dirty boys playing at cricket? For my part I do not feel one bit older or wiser

now than I did then.' For as some apply their minds to what is next them, and labour ever and attain to governing the Tower, and entering the Trinity House,—to commanding armies, and applauding pilots,—so there are also some who are ever anxious to-day about what ought only to be considered to-morrow; who never get on; whom the earth neglects, and whom tradesmen little esteem; who are where they were; who cause grief and are loved; that are at once a by-word and a blessing; who do not live in life, and it seems will not die in death: and of such was Hartley Coleridge."

Once expressed, such ideas as these are obvious, yet how out of the way! What mind disciplined in the creed of getting on in life would say that there was ever dull monotony in activity, and yet how obvious it is that nearly every active business entails dull monotony. Walter Bagehot's energies were never entirely engrossed by the stream of active currents. Some, and those among the choicest, were kept for retiring into the calm, back water in which the finer spirit could bathe itself, where life was reflected half as a dream—only. Here, however, he could not abide for long. The home tragedy was ever there to thrust him out into practical activity, the "dull drudgery" that, once chosen as his work in life, meant duty and filled the hours with something to be done. At the Bank or at The Bridge no speculations on the mysteries and puzzles of life could invade and take possession, no leaps or flights of imagination could interfere with business. But in his study at Herd's Hill, overlooking green lawns and widespread vaporous moorlands, away to distant blue ranges of hills, very different conditions of being were created. The bigger meaning of things would then creep out sideways from the main theme of his articles, and he felt inspired to play with his subject,—play various tunes of his very own.

There is a distinct characteristic in Walter Bagehot's writings which is very obvious in the "Hartley Coleridge". To those who knew him intimately his writing is what he has called certain kinds of poetry, *self-delineative.* No writing could be less self-conscious, none more *self-delineative.* With intuitive spring of mind and imagination he was seized by ideas in-

spired by incidents in his own life and in the lives of those about them, and these ideas and imaginings found words in his writings. In this way it is a part of himself he was depicting, for it was on his individual temperament that the ideas had been reflected,—ideas which arose from his own circumstances, his own character, feelings, and imagination, and it is his own genius which develops them in the form they take in literature. Those circumstances which surrounded Walter Bagehot all his life were such as to give him exceptional experiences, but experiences which could not be obviously described or ostensibly dwelt on. But they coloured the spirit of his thoughts and feelings. He proudly resented the tyranny of those who blame or scorn their fellows because they suffer from the effects of God-given calamities. He had the strongest sympathy for those who were overweighted by their destiny. The weaknesses and temptations of such an one as Hartley Coleridge appealed to his sympathies as far more pathetic than contemptible. He was ever conscious that God ordained the conditions of those who *must* fail according to man's standard, no less than the conditions of those who are bound to triumph in the world's fight. He himself possessed the moral and mental strength to triumph, but that made him all the more tender towards those who had it not. The apparent cynicism noticeable in some of his writings is, I think, when traced to ground, but the offshoot of a scorn which he felt for the brutal bluntness such as the prosperous often show towards the failures in life. The pomposities of the Modern Pharisee he derided, though always with that genial kind of humour which never could create "bad blood". Lenient and kind by nature he resented the idea that any liability to temptation and failure put a man or woman out of court altogether. His sense of fairness went down deeply into the core of a question, and he weighed what could and could not be helped with a fine perspicuity.

> For every evil under the sun
> There is a cure, or there is none;
> If there is, then try and find it,
> If there's not, then never mind it.

Such was the spirit in which Walter Bagehot went through life, bearing not only his own troubles but those of others.

A curious contrast suggests itself when we think of Walter Bagehot writing the "Hartley Coleridge" in his study at Herd's Hill, and the same Walter Bagehot on the same days learning business from his father in the counting-houses of Stuckey's Bank and of The Bridge.

"We all, whether we write or speak, must somewhat drape ourselves when we address our fellows," writes R. L. Stevenson. Walter Bagehot was no exception to the rule. His parents read his writings, but the life that he and his father led together while he was being initiated into business gave little scope for real intimacy in the things which exercised Walter's vivid, speculative imagination. By Mr. Bagehot *business* had ever been treated as a solemn duty, a duty that had become almost an idol to him, so constantly did he follow the dictates of his conscience, a conscience illuminated by vivid spiritual fervour. But he felt no pleasurable excitement in making money, no relish given to life through achieving successful business transactions: only the calm satisfaction of having secured to his family a sufficient income wherewith to enjoy the best things in life. Viewing business as a stern duty he endeavoured to train Walter to look at the transacting of it with a certain amount of solemnity. But this Walter could not do. The processes arranged to suit the majority of business minds bored him. He arrived at conclusions through his direct independent judgment, and resented unnecessary trammels with which custom is wont to encircle the modes of transacting business. Punctilious formalities which were considered essential seemed a waste of time, and teased him. With Mr. Bagehot punctuality was a law of the Medes and Persians. The Langport people set their watches when Mr. Bagehot walked every morning through the town to the Bank. Walter let out his want of faith in such solemnities with much humour and geniality, so that, though his father was somewhat alarmed by the short cuts he wanted to take in acquiring the rudiments of business, and the light and airy manner in which he treated the formalities of the counting-house, there

was no unpleasant jarring or want of confidence between them. Once having learnt the preliminaries, Walter's quick insight and perceptions mastered all that was really essential, and his father recognised that he could treat important matters as wisely, as the most rigid *doctrinaire*, and as confidently and easily as he could take a fence out hunting. He perceived further that the self-confidence with which Walter attacked the serious problems of banking did not arise from vanity, but from an intuitive power of seizing the main issues of a question. Consequently Mr. Bagehot gradually learnt to lean on his judgment and opinions, though never, perhaps, fully recognising the wide range of interests over which Walter's genius travelled. The fact was certainly puzzling to such a mind as Mr. Bagehot's that while Walter could cope successfully with real and important difficulties, he never could add up figures with immaculate correctness.

After having pursued his studies at the Bank for some months, Walter wrote the following to his old school-fellow, Killigrew Wait :—

"HERD'S HILL,
"*Wednesday, 5th January*, 1853.

"MY DEAR WAIT,

"Here am I in my father's counting-house trying (and failing) to do sums, and being rowed ninety-nine times a day for some horrid sin against the conventions of mercantile existence. My family perhaps you know are merchants, shipowners, and bankers, etc. etc., here and elsewhere. Out of their multifarious occupations I hope to be able to find, though I cannot precisely say that I have yet found, some one to which I am not contemptibly unequal. As to your notion of doing anything *well*, it is so many years since I abandoned the idea, that I can't now quite enter into the feeling. My difficulty is in doing anything *at all*. The only thing I ever really knew was Special Pleading, and the moment I had learned that, the law reformers botched and abolished it. It was a very pretty art, and the only trade in which the logical faculties appear to be of any particular service, and was

therefore the champagne of life, but this people which knoweth not the law, went and abolished it. I suppose you like business by this time. I think I might if I knew anything about it, and if my relations would admit that sums are matters of opinion.

"I can't claim to be very familiar with German matters. I like to read English books best, because I am partially acquainted with the language in which they are composed. Besides I fancy they are the truest books after all. The German ideas *may* be true hereafter, but in the existing world it seems to me that they are often a good deal misled. If a man knoweth not what he hath seen (and no German ever does), how shall he know that which he hath not seen? Besides they say there is no such thing as nonsense, in which I think them quite wrong. I do not know that I can tell you 'what I am thinking about,' for I am a good deal inclined to believe that I have ceased to think about anything."

As an antidote to the grind of office work, Walter Bagehot, following the example of his uncle, Vincent Stuckey, started keeping a pack of harriers with his cousin, Vincent Wood.

Having no surviving son, Mrs. Vincent Stuckey adopted her eldest grandson as heir to her husband's property and to his position in the Bank. On her death Mr. Vincent Wood changed his name to Stuckey, continuing to live at Hill House as he had done in his grandmother's lifetime. He possessed much of his grandfather's ability for business and genial sociability of disposition.[1]

Though a business life in its earliest days may have had its tiresome side, there was much that soon became congenial to Bagehot in his life in Somerset. In any case it was better than law and London. The beauty of the country inspired ideas, hunting was inspiriting, and the Bank and The Bridge gradually became interesting. The notable qualities in his Uncle had left their stamp on the Bank, which he had devel-

[1] He and another of Walter Bagehot's cousins, Mr. Vincent Reynolds, nephew of the "Uncle Reynolds" at Hampstead, married two sisters, nieces of Sir John Lethbridge, whose family was renowned for its distinguished beauty.

oped into an important West of England business. Stuckey's Bank was assuredly no ordinary country bank.

About the time Walter Bagehot settled at Herd's Hill, he was feeling anxious about Mr. Hutton's health.

On being elected Principal of University Hall when Mr. Clough resigned the post, Mr. Hutton married Miss Mary Roscoe. Soon after, the lung trouble, from which he had suffered for several years, developed into a serious disease. Bagehot writes to Roscoe: "I saw him (Hutton) on Sunday and he was as well as one could hope, but I can't but *fear* very much about him". It was decided that he and his wife should go to the West Indies, a warm climate being recommended. So grave was his condition, that Walter Bagehot, in parting with him, expressed to others great doubts that he should ever see him again.

In January, 1853, Bagehot writes from Herd's Hill:—

"MY DEAR HUTTON,

"I have devoted my time for the last four months nearly exclusively to the art of book-keeping by double entry, the theory of which is agreeable and pretty but the practice perhaps as horrible as anything ever was. I maintain too in vain that sums are matters of opinion, but the people in command here do not comprehend the nature of contingent matter and try to prove that figures tend to one result more than another, which I find myself to be false as they always come different. But there is no influencing the instinctive dogmatism of the uneducated mind. In other respects I approve of mercantile life. There is some excitement in it, if this does not wear off; always a little to do and no wearing labour, which is something towards perfection. Chevalier Bunsen has published a huge book on 'Hippolytus,' but what other people say is Origen's. Bunsen's book is four volumes and contains a mass of learning shovelled together as ill as possible and not working out anything clearly or well. But there is a German earnestness and solidity about the book which make it agreeable to read, and the facts are very good. He proves in a beautifully Germanic manner that this book was written by

Hippolytus because it is a collection of heresies, and Photrus mentions a book by Hippolytus on heresies, thirty-three in number, beginning with A and ending with B. Now the book in question does not end with B or begin A or contain thirty-three heresies, but Bunsen says it is all quite consistent and has a special subsidiary hypothesis for each inconsistency which is very amusing. I believe he is right about the book though on the whole, and that it was certainly not written by Origen, and perhaps by Hippolytus, but you would be delighted with the manner in which he goes round and round the subject, and the unspeakable importance which he attaches to it. His own existence would not require a keener argument, or obtain it. It is splendid to see such a bookish turn; as if it mattered who wrote such a book, for it is certainly stupid, that is agreed. Have you seen anything of the blacks? It can't be a pretty study, but it may be an instructive one. People are quite wild here again about Slavery, as strong as they ever were when there was a *bonâ fide* agitation in this country on the point. I should like to know accurately what comes from emancipation, taking it as a question of sacrifices. I can imagine many cases in which Slavery is good, for a population, but none or not many in which traders can be trusted to be slaveowners. It may answer in rural villages, where they only supply their own demand and where the notion of the slaves being capital is extremely secondary, but never in a mercantile community where that notion is the main one and the notion of moral and personal dependence extremely faint. You will know that we have a change of ministry in England. Lord Derby is gone out and Lord Aberdeen with everybody else is come in. I think it is an excellent ministry though Sir James Graham is in it, whom I detest. They are the best men we've got, though they are frightfully old, and have many of the notions of very old people. I am afraid what they will do about the franchise. I doubt if they have really studied the subject. They are the old Reform Bill people and have not any new ideas since that time, otherwise I think they'll do. You see my friend Louis Napoleon is Emperor. I think there is no doubt his foreign

policy will be mainly aggressive and this country must look sharp or he'll be upon us. I don't mean now or to-morrow but soon."

On the Huttons arriving in Barbadoes they found yellow fever raging and both at once caught the epidemic. When Mr. Hutton recovered consciousness, after passing days in a state of delirium, he found that his wife had succumbed to it. On receiving the news of his sister's death, Mr. Roscoe at once started for Barbadoes "without regard," Mr. Hutton writes in his memoir of William Roscoe, "either to the personal risk which he incurred, or to the melancholy task which he undertook".

From Taunton on 16th March, 1853, Walter Bagehot wrote his farewell to him:—

"MY DEAR ROSCOE,

"Good-bye. Give my kindest and best remembrances to Hutton. I hope indeed you will be of service to him and I hope you may bring him home to us better than I can now get myself to expect. I will arrange about the *Prospective* though what to write about I know no more than the people in the street. I write with ever so many people talking figures about me and I hardly know what I write, but good-bye and God speed you."

The brothers-in-law returned together to England, Mr. Hutton heartbroken, and with shattered health. Bagehot went to London to meet him, and at once concerned himself with finding some congenial occupation wherewith to distract his mind.

"LANGPORT, 15*th August*, 1853.

"MY DEAR HUTTON,

"By way of the next step I strongly advise you to write the article on Atheism which you mentioned and to get the review made over to you as soon as may be. I should like to write for you a short article on the new Series of M. Arnold's poems. They are not very much in themselves, but they show character and afford, I think, matter for a short paper and no reading up of any subject will be necessary,

which is a great blessing and consideration. Or I will write on the 'Principles of Taxation,' a dreary article if you like it better, on the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech and the Report of the Income Tax Committee. Only make your selection in due time, so that I may have a long time to waste and then do it in a very great hurry exactly at the last. You can hardly imagine the relief it has been to me to have seen you and to have a new and not unmixedly painful picture of you in my imagination and to see your mind so clear and healthy and firm. I did not fancy for a moment that the suffering which you feel and have felt would weaken your intellect or obscure your judgment. But I was not sure that it would not increase the tendency to mere melancholy, which I (characteristically enough) used to hold to be morbid. I think it has diminished it. The real and daily pain which you do not express but cannot conceal, and the constant habit of putting down serious and solemn thoughts, give a distinctness and coolness to your views which I think they sometimes used to want. There is more of the pure steel in them, as if they came from a solider and clearer state of mind."

In the July number of the *Prospective Review*, 1853, appeared "Shakespeare—the Man," very self-delineative, but differing from the "Hartley Coleridge" because it was a different side of the self delineated. It flavours more of the Cavalier side of Bagehot's nature, and treats politics from somewhat the country gentleman point of view. The mere fact that he took up this subject proves that living in the country had cleared away the scares. The essay seems to have been written to prove that that great Author's writings are, whatever else they may be besides, self-delineating. "Some extreme sceptics we know," Bagehot writes in the second paragraph of "Shakespeare—the Man," "doubt whether it is possible to deduce anything as to an author's character from his works. Yet surely people do not keep a tame steam-engine to write their books; and if those books were really written by a man, he must have been a man to write them; he must have had the thoughts which they express, have acquired the knowledge they contain, have possessed the style in which we read them.

The difficulty is a defect of the critics. A person who knows nothing of an author he has read, will not know much of an author whom he has seen. . . . Shakespeare's works," he writes, "could only be produced by a first-rate imagination working on a first-rate experience. . . . To a great experience one thing is essential, an experiencing nature. . . . The reason why so few good books are written is that so few people that can write *know* anything. After all, the original way of writing books may turn out to be the best. The first author, it is plain, could not have taken anything from books, since there were no books for him to copy from; he looked at things for himself."

As before noted, Bagehot proves that Shakespeare's political views can be clearly made out through his writings, and no less his wholesome religious instincts. "There is a religion," Bagehot writes, "of weekdays as well as Sundays, of 'cakes and ale,' as well as of pews and altar cloth. This England lay before Shakespeare as it lies before us all, with its green fields, and its long hedgerows, and its many trees, and its great towns, and its endless hamlets, and its motley society, and its long history, and its bold exploits, and its gathering power, and he saw that they were good. To him, perhaps, more than to anyone else, has it been given to see that they were a great unity, a great religious object; that if you could only descend to the inner life, to the deep things, to the secret principles of its noble vigour, to the essence of character, to what we know of Hamlet and seem to fancy of Ophelia, we might, so far as we are capable of so doing, understand the nature which God has made. Let us, then, think of him not as a teacher of dry dogmas, or a sayer of hard sayings, but as

> A priest to us all,
> Of the wonder and bloom of the world.

A teacher of the hearts of men and women; one from whom may be learned something of that inmost principle that ever modulates

> With murmurs of the air,
> And motions of the forests and the sea
> And voice of living beings, and woven hymns,
> Of night and day and the deep heart of man.

"We must pause, lest our readers reject us, as the Bishop of Durham the poor curate, because he was mystical and confused."

In the October number of the *Prospective Review*, 1854, appeared the last essay Bagehot wrote for it, as about that time the *Review* ceased to exist. The subject was Bishop Butler. The character of Bishop Butler attracted Bagehot, and gave him opportunities to explain his ideas on two kinds of religion, the natural and the supernatural, the one arising "from mere contemplation of external beauty," the other "the source of which is within the mine, the religion of superstition". Needless to say, Bishop Butler's religion was that *within the mine*. "No one could tell from his writings that the world was beautiful. If the world were a Durham mine or an exact square, if no part of it were more expressive than a gravel pit, or a chalk quarry, the teaching of Butler would be as true as it is now."

In a newspaper cutting of 1858, we read the following paragraph: "Several years ago, 'Advanced Socinians,' the Rev. Messrs. Taylor and Martineau, founded the *Prospective Review* with the conspicuous motto from St. Bernard, *Respice, Aspice, Prospice*. From something narrow and sectarian in its tone, the *Prospective* did not prosper, and in the hope of a better future, its conductors re-baptised it the *National Review*. During the last twelve months, a series of papers, critical and characteristic, evidently from the same pen, have attracted considerable attention to the quiet pages of the *National Review*."

These papers were by Bagehot. Mr. Hutton and he had undertaken to edit this new *Review* together; Martineau and Taylor were to find most of the money, and to write frequently for it. A Mr. Darbishire was the proprietor, and a certain Theobold, the printer. Bagehot seems to have taken the most active part in starting the *Review* and in inspiring the tone of the *Prospectus*, even if he did not actually pen it himself.

The first essay, that on "William Cowper," Bagehot wrote for the *National Review* in the July number, 1855, the last on

"Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning, or Pure, Ornate and Grotesque Art in English Poetry," in the November number, 1864. For those nine years directing, managing, and writing for the *National Review* were among his chief occupations. It was a source to him of worry and of expense, but also of great interest and pleasure, partly because the work for it kept him in constant touch with Mr. Hutton. The *National Review* never had a very large circulation. Perhaps its tone was not sufficiently committed to any one line of thought for it to secure a fervent adherence from any one section of the public. This was to be accounted for, perhaps, by the fact that the opinions of the promoters were never sufficiently harmonious. Martineau and Tayler were distinct Unitarians, Mr. Hutton was gradually veering towards the Church of England, and Bagehot had never held Unitarian doctrines. They had never appealed to his sympathies, nor did he hold them to be logical, and it was Bagehot who more than others gave most of himself to the intellectual side of the management. The *National Review* was fully appreciated by those who read it, but these were a refined and cultured minority.

In March, 1855, Bagehot writes to Mr. Hutton:—

"I am much obliged to you for engaging to take the Editorship of the *National* at my request, though I own I think you will like it better than you think you shall. Of course you may count on my doing anything for you in the way of co-operation—literary or practical locomotion which is not in my own absolute power, always excepted. Even if it were offered me I could not have the responsibility of the *Review* absolutely on me. It would be sure to come at a time when there was a press of work in banking or shipping, and either the number would not appear—if it did appear it would be certainly misprinted—or I must neglect what I have undertaken here, which I should of course not choose to do. The only part I think I could be of any use would be perhaps in planning the secular articles for each number at first and I shall be most willing to do all I can in this, as much as if it were my own work.

"It is clear we shall be able to start. I will send my

money to Darbishire directly. How about Lady Byron? H. C. Robinson should be let alone, I think. He will give in in the end—I should like to see the list of contributors. Ask Martineau to choose his subject and to write to Froude. I will write to Greg, as soon as Martineau's has been decided.

"What a splendid phrase 'The equilibrium of universal justice'! quite a 'fresh hare'; I never heard of it before. The chief is right about Lord Palmerston. Lord Aberdeen was the man. A truly *considerate* mind.

"You theologians are too intolerant of one another's crotchets. I think Martineau will do it very well. Jowett's book is a very able and good one on the whole. I did not describe it justly when I wrote to you. I hope M. won't abuse him too much for staying in the church, though I own I think his views about as consistent with the worship of the Grand Llama, but he will be abused enough by his brother clergy, and there is no use our clamouring too. However, M. must do what he likes. He *will* do what he likes: I shall preserve my tranquillity. You would like Jowett on the whole. I do not see why Stanley should not stay in the church. He is not a great logician. J. is morbidly sensitive to illogicality. I believe the result of J.'s book is that St. Paul had no precise notions of anything, and in this I agree. I am afraid M. will rather wish to impute to him definite error.

"Roscoe's article on the 'Humorous' I should like to have very much. You won't think it orthodox enough probably. A man said to me quite bitterly, that the writer of your article (Protestantism) had no business in the Church of England. You had left on him the impression of a moderate Maurician, not going so far quite as that, but I should like Roscoe's article extremely. The Bible must be treated in a human manner. It is a terrible superstition."

In January, 1856, Bagehot writes to Mr. Hutton:—

"There is a man FitzJames Stephen who writes in the 'Cambridge Essays' very well indeed, whom we should try to get hold of. We might offer him George Sand. His essay is the relation of novels to life, and is very acute and clever. You might look at it.

. . . "Martineau's still strikes me as an *awful* production. It appears to mean that you are to go into Poland and raise a standard of revolt, without in the least knowing whether the Poles have any capacity or desire for freedom, about which he admits there are no *data*, but on the *chance* of their having some, which either means that you are to desert them, if you do not find them up to the mark, or that you are to maintain them or attempt by endless war to maintain them, although they are unfit—both which are absurd. Besides you would have the active opposition of Austria and Prussia, the active sympathy of the *rouge* party abroad, which last would mean the horror and alarm of all conservatives here at home.

"I think you made a great hit about Stephen—you manage these sort of people very well, you extract so much out of them. I think certainly I should not reject an article for assuming the Deity of Christ, but I could not allow an article to go in assuming or defending the textual authority of Scripture. Coleridge's *a priori* proof of the Trinity (which he never wrote down) would suit us very well. Practically this divides from the Trinitarians, because in some sense or other they must hold the authority of Scripture. It is their postulate. Neither Jowett nor Maurice *seem* to hold it; but if asked Jowett would say it was an 'antinomy' and Maurice would become inarticulate.

"When we fail, the cry against us will be that we have gone off too much into general literature and neglected the objects the money was subscribed for. I am most anxious to guard against this by making the last number in every line special and distinctive. On this account I much wish you would write something with a semi-theological bearing. There is the revision of the translation of the Bible. It would be a good opportunity for *praising* our translation as a work of art, and quizzing Sir G. Grey who won't alter the commas for fear 'of shaking the faith of multitudes'—the grossest Protestant superstition—but I do not care about the particular subject, only that you should write on a half-religious subject. Remember we are not to have the sacred Taylor."

In the autumn of 1856 Bagehot visited his friend Roscoe

in Wales, who had settled there after his marriage with Miss Emily Malin. There for the rest of his life William Roscoe enjoyed gardening, writing essays and poetry, studying Elizabethan poetry, and occasionally acting as Marshall with Mr. Justice Compton when on circuit.

Bagehot's first article in the *National Review*, "William Cowper," reflected distinctly the influence of his home trouble. This trouble probably suggested the subject; in any case it is written with the subtle insight into the subject of insanity which only personal experience can give. In the next two numbers, October, 1855, and January, 1856, appeared "The First Edinburgh Reviewers" and "Thomas Babington Macaulay". He had now fully entered into his life of action no less than his matured life of thought. After quoting Macaulay's eulogy on the greater fascination dead authors have than living, Bagehot writes: "Only a mind impassive to our daily life, un-alive to bores and evils, to joys and sorrows, incapable of the deepest sympathies, a prey to print could imagine it. The mass of men have stronger ties and warmer hopes. The exclusive devotion to books tires. We require to love and hate, to act and live." In "The First Edinburgh Reviewers" we have an insight into the working of that lonely speculative imagination which took refuge from the stirring life of business in the study overlooking the lawns and wide-stretching moorlands. There are lines in this essay which perhaps have touched more readers than any others he has written, and which have served as a text for preachers in pulpits. They contrast the vocation of a Lord Jeffrey and that of a Wordsworth, a contrast depicted with Bagehot's own singular whimsical humour on the one hand, and by his deep poetic and high penetrating acumen on the other.

"There certainly are kinds of truths, borne in as it were instinctively on the human intellect, most influential on the character and the heart, yet hardly capable of stringent statement, difficult to limit by an elaborate definition. Their course is shadowy; the mind seems rather to have seen than to see them, more to feel after than definitely apprehend them. They commonly involve an infinite element which, of course,

cannot be stated precisely, or else a first principle—an original tendency of our intellectual constitution, which it is impossible not to feel, and yet which it is hard to extricate in terms and words. Of this latter kind is what has been called the religion of Nature, or more exactly perhaps, the religion of the imagination. This is an interpretation of the world. Accordingly, to it the beauty of the universe has a meaning, its grandeur a soul, its sublimity an expression. As we gaze on the faces of those who we love; as we watch the light of life in the dawning of their eyes, and the play of their features, and the wildness of their animation; as we trace in changing lineaments a varying sign; as a charm and a thrill seem to run along the tone of a voice, to haunt the mind with a mere word; as a tone seems to roam in the ear; as a trembling fancy hears words that are unspoken; so in Nature the mystical sense finds a motion in the mountain, and a power in the waves, and a meaning in the long white line of the shore, and a thought in the blue of heaven, and a gushing soul in the buoyant light, an unbounded being in the vast void of air, and

Wakeful watching in the pointed stars.

"There is a philosophy in this which might be explained, if explaining were to our purpose. It might be advanced that there are original sources of expression in the essential grandeur and sublimity of Nature, of an analogous though fainter kind to those familiar, inexplicable signs by which we trace in the very face and outward lineaments of man, the existence and working of the mind within. But be this as it may, it is certain that Mr. Wordsworth preached this kind of religion, and that Lord Jeffrey did not believe a word of it. His cool, sharp, collected mind revolted from its mysticism; his detective intelligence was absorbed in its apparent fallaciousness; his light humour made sport with the sublimities of the preacher. His love of perspicuity was vexed by its indefiniteness; the precise philosopher was amazed at its mystic unintelligibility. Finding a little fault was doubtless not unpleasant to him. The reviewer's pen—*φόνος ἠρώεσσιν*—has seldom been more poignantly wielded. 'If,' he was told, 'you would be alarmed

into the semblance of modesty, you would charm everybody; but remember my joke against you' (Sydney Smith *loquitur*) 'about the moon. D—n the solar system—bad light—planets too distant—pestered with comets: feeble contrivance; could make a better with great ease.'

"Yet we do not mean that in this great literary feud, either of the combatants had all the right, or gained all the victory. The world has given judgment. Both Mr. Wordsworth and Lord Jeffrey have received their reward. The one had his own generation: the laughter of men, the applause of drawing-rooms, the concurrence of the crowd; the other a succeeding age, the fond enthusiasm of secret students, the lonely rapture of lonely minds. And each has received according to his kind. If all cultivated men speak differently because of the existence of Wordsworth and Coleridge; if not a thoughtful English book has appeared for forty years, without some trace for good or evil of their influence; if sermon-writers subsist upon their thoughts; if 'sacred poets' thrive by translating their weaker portion into the speech of women; if, when all this is over, some sufficient part of their writings will ever be fitting food for wild musing and solitary meditation, surely this is because they possessed the inner nature, 'an intense and glowing mind,' 'the vision and the faculty divine'. But if, perchance, in their weaker moments, the great authors of the *Lyrical Ballads* did ever imagine that the world was to pause because of their verses; that 'Peter Bell' would be popular in the drawing-rooms; that 'Christabel' would be perused in the City; that people of fashion would make a handbook of the 'Excursion'—it was well for them to be told at once that this was not so. Nature ingeniously prepared a shrill artificial voice, which spoke in season and out of season, enough and more than enough, what will ever be the idea of the cities of the plain concerning those who live alone among the mountains; of the frivolous concerning the grave; of the gregarious concerning the recluse; of those who laugh concerning those who laugh not; of the common concerning the uncommon; of those who lend on usury concerning those who lend not; the notion of the world of those whom

it will not reckon among the righteous—it said, 'This will never do!'"

In the same number of the *National Review* as the Macaulay appeared the essay on Edward Gibbon, in the July number, "The Character of Sir Robert Peel," in October, "Percy Bysshe Shelley," and in this same year, 1856, thirteen articles in the *Saturday Review*.

In the December of that year, an event occurred which led to momentous changes in Bagehot's life. Mr. W. R. Greg, who was an intimate friend of my father's and a constant inmate of our home, asked Mr. Hutton if he would like to edit the *Economist*. If he desired to do so, Mr. Greg was willing to suggest the idea to my father, the proprietor. Mr. Hutton hesitated. He had reasons for wishing, before taking another step affecting his private life, to visit the tomb of his wife in the West Indies. He was entertaining the idea of marrying again. He wrote to Bagehot, but making mention only of Mr. Greg's offer and the desire he had to go abroad before accepting it. Bagehot writes in answer:—

"1856.

"My dear Hutton,

"I have thought over *very* carefully what you tell me of Greg's offer, but I cannot think you are acting rightly. You have now an opportunity which may not occur again of *fixing* yourself in an established post, likely to be useful and permanent, and give you a fulcrum and position in the world which is what you have always wanted and is quite necessary to comfort in England. I do not think you ought to risk it for the sake of *holiday*. You may have been right to ask it as a beginning of the negotiation for it may be a gain to you to get it, but it seems to me quite out of the question to make it a *sine qua non*. Offers of this kind are not to be picked up in the street every day. As to holidays, it is one of the lessons of life to learn to be independent of them. They are scarcely to be obtained by people in regular employment except in very fortunate circumstances. I have some right to say this myself for except when I was at Roscoe's last autumn, I have not been a week without doing *some* business. I do not say very

much, but still some—enough to deaden the mind for more than four years. I assure you, if you seriously mean to work hard in England, and you *require* a good deal of work to keep your mind healthy, you must not hope for any such long gaps. At any rate, I feel very strongly that you ought not to make the having one an essential condition of obtaining so good a position."

Mr. Greg agreed to leave his offer open till Mr. Hutton returned from his voyage to the West Indies. On hearing this Bagehot writes :—

"What is to be your post at first, are you a contributor or assistant editor or what?

"As to the question of Christ's nature, I think it turns entirely on the critical question as to the nature of the Gospel histories. I am more and more disposed to believe that these are not the narratives of eye-witnesses at all, but embodiments of traditions dating from the second generation. I believe the case is one of internal evidence merely. The external being enough to justify our believing them to be narratives of eye-witnesses if they read like it, but not in any way such as to compel us to accept them as such without internal evidence or in the face of internal difficulties. The internal evidence is of course to a great extent one of impression, but I should dwell a great deal on their fragmentary, impersonal character, going here and there just as traditions do with no reason, but not adhering the person of the eye-witness, or of specific informants as careful contemporary narratives do. Again the confusion of the chronology is very great ; tradition always produces this, but four writers, all with the means of knowing, and none of them adhering exclusively to mere episodes as eye-witnesses might, are very unlikely to give four totally inharmonious narratives of the whole. Details might be wrong, but the main times and seasons would be clear. Little undesigned coincidences too might be looked for. We have as much right to a Horae Christianae as to a Horae Paulinae. The extreme oppositions too of the Gospel of John is very remarkable. That there should be differences of kinds in traditions is intelligible ; they are the traditions of different com-

munities, one say in Asia Minor among the Hellenists, the other of Temple-going Jews at Jerusalem, but it is difficult to imagine three first-hand narratives, each meaning apparently to give a sufficient view of an entire career, omitting a whole system of conception and doctrines recorded by a fourth. Again the character of Christ is given I think in the way traditions represent character, and not as contemporary narratives give it. Tradition chooses its points. It gives the characteristic features of a character only and omits all others. Somehow it won't believe any others. Defoe's is the style of the contemporary narrator. He is puzzled with detail and can hardly lift his facts. Are you not conscious yourself that you do not know so much of a man just after reading his biography. It requires time to let the encumbrance of circumstances pass off. Just in the same way there is no singleness, no unbroken, defined, unified delineation of character in contemporary narratives. It is difficult no doubt in an age when the habit of writing has made us unfamiliar with the power of tradition to fancy it could ever have given such delineations as those in the Gospels. Yet if we look at the Old Testament we see instances that help to make it possible. The delineation of Elijah for example is as evidently traditional as anything can be, but how marked, how consistent his character is, how different from Elisha's or from Samuel's. In the New Testament too the first chapters of Luke and Matthew, the former especially, are as remarkable as most parts of those Gospels, yet these are doubtless traditional. There is an intense, anxious story-telling impulse in some states of society which produces of itself wonderful narratives. The authors are as unknown as the authors of old ballads. Such traditions though inaccurate in facts are most sensitive to truth of effect, the latter is their canon of truth in fact. You are to remember that the theory of the historical origin of the Gospels is very recent. The old theory was that they were written by the 'Spirit of God'. I think, or incline to think, they were composed by intense, half-inspired, most affectionate story-telling impulse. Of course with this sort of view the question of Christ's nature is simple. Any sort of incarnation requires to be proved by the most

close positive historical testimony. Of course you won't think of this subject on your voyage. Whatever subject a man starts intending to think of, on that he is quite sure not to think at all.

"I hope wherever you go you will feel sure of my affection. Cold I may be, but inconstant I certainly am not.

"Yours most affly.,

"WALTER BAGEHOT."

This connection of Mr. Hutton with the *Economist* suggested to Bagehot the idea of himself writing for the *Economist*. Mr. Hutton had started on his voyage to the West Indies, and Bagehot did not personally know Mr. Greg; but Dr. Martineau knew both Mr. Greg and Bagehot, so through this channel an introduction to my father was obtained, the result of which was that Bagehot was asked to Claverton Manor to talk about banking with the idea of his writing letters on it in the *Economist*.

CHAPTER IX.

ENGAGEMENT AND MARRIAGE.

It was late in the afternoon of the 24th January, 1857, that two of my sisters and I were walking in the woods of Claverton Manor. To the left of the house when facing it, is one of the avenues of beautiful beech trees which the notable Ralph Allen, Fielding's "Squire Allworthy," planted when he was the owner of Claverton. This particular avenue was called "the Beechery," and led by a moss-grown path up to "the Rocks" on Claverton Downs, where Gainsborough wandered and sketched. On this afternoon we had struck by a smaller pathway into the woods on the right leading down the hill to a stream. I remember the moment as if it were yesterday. Certain moments of life lodge themselves ineffaceably in the memory without apparently any adequate cause. We heard sounds of wheels. We agreed "that Mr. Bag-*hot* must be arriving". We did not know how to pronounce his name, and felt no interest in his arrival, so continued our walk. He had been introduced to my father as a "young banker in the West of England" who wanted to write in the *Economist*, and he arrived that 24th of January at Claverton Manor to discuss banking and political economy with my father, then Financial Secretary to the Treasury and member for Devonport. Unfortunately the day before his arrival my father's mare "Beauty" had shied, and crushed his ankle against a wall, so he was confined to his bed. There was a dinner-party of neighbours and acquaintances from Bath that evening at which my father could not appear, but he interviewed Walter Bagehot in his room upstairs after dinner. One of the guests at dinner was the successor to the celebrated Beau Nash, and was reigning in his stead as master of the ceremonies at the Bath balls. The fact that he, Walter Bagehot, coming to Claverton to

discuss the solemnities of banking and political economy with the Secretary of the Treasury and proprietor of the *Economist*, should be confronted by a gentleman whose vocation was of so frivolous a character, tickled his humour greatly he told us in after days. As two of my sisters and I were still in the schoolroom it was not till breakfast the next day that we first saw him. But then he made his mark. When breakfast was over, and our German governess had left the room, he turned big dark eyes quickly round upon us, of the schoolroom, and exclaimed: "Your governess is like an egg!" We at once saw she *was* like an egg! From that moment he rose in our eyes from the status of a political economist to that of a fellow-creature. He became one of us. Poor governess! My memory of her since is chiefly associated with the starting-point of the good understanding which from the first existed between Walter Bagehot and his five sisters-in-law. We were six sisters without a brother. It was something strangely new, delightful and nutritious that he brought into our lives. My sister Eliza whom he married was the eldest of the six, I the youngest. She did not come down to that first breakfast when Walter established his position with us, having a headache; but she had so far arrested his attention the evening before at dinner that he missed her. He left Claverton the next day, and my father with some of the family went to London a few days later, as Parliament was to open early in February.

To the young the appearance of a person is of great importance, and, after he had called our Fraülein "like an egg," we closely inspected Walter Bagehot's appearance. We were puzzled. We could not call him handsome, but decidedly he was not plain. He was like no one else. His strong individuality over-rode any classification. He was tall and thin with rather high, narrow, square shoulders; his hands were long and delicate and the movements of his fingers very characteristic. He held his fingers quite straight from the knuckles and would often stroke his mouth or rub his forehead when he was thinking or talking.

Dr. Woodrow Wilson gives this description of his appear-

ance: "The very appearance of the man," says President Woodrow Wilson, "was a sort of outer index to the singular variety of capacity which has made him so notable a figure in the literary annals of England. A mass of black, wavy hair; a dark eye, with depths full of slumberous, playful fire; a ruddy skin that bespoke active blood, quick in its rounds; the lithe figure of an excellent horseman; a nostril full, delicate, quivering, like that of a blooded racer; such were the fitting outward marks of a man in whom life and thought and fancy abounded; the aspect of a man of unflagging vivacity, of wholesome, hearty humour, of a ready intellectual sympathy, of wide and penetrative observation."

Though President Wilson never saw Walter Bagehot, this description is particularly happy, except that "ruddy" hardly described Walter Bagehot's complexion. He had a very fine skin, very white near where the hair started, and a high colour —what might be called a hectic colour—concentrated on the cheek bones, as you often see it in the West country. Such a colour is associated with soft winds and a moist air, cider-growing orchards, and very green, wet grass. His eyelids were thin, and of singularly delicate texture, and the white of the eyeballs was a blue white. He would pace a room when talking, and, as the ideas framed themselves in words, he would throw his head back as some animals do when sniffing the air. The way he moved, his voice, everything about him, was individual. To us Walter was ever *Walter*—and that meant something quite unlike anybody else.

The upshot of the talk at Claverton was a series of letters which he started at once in the *Economist*, signed "A Banker". The first commences and concludes with the following passages in the *Economist* of 7th February, 1857:—

"THE GENERAL ASPECT OF THE BANKING QUESTION.

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'ECONOMIST'.

"SIR,

"In addressing to you a series of letters upon banking, I do not pretend to have any perfectly new theory to advance. On a topic of which the literature is already so copious,

absolute novelty would be scarcely a recommendation, but on a complicated question it is desirable that the various lights in which its details strike individual minds should be continually expressed. The history of science shows that you cannot otherwise be secure against hasty assumptions, a slavish following of able men, and an unthinking adoption of plausible and popular theories. . . .

"There appears, therefore, to be no reason for departing from the obvious view, that while the Act of 1819 is *prima facie* reasonable in enacting that promises shall be performed, that of 1847 is *prima facie* unreasonable in enacting that certain promises seemingly innocuous shall not be made. Of course this is not conclusive; many *prima facie* conclusions are wholly erroneous; but, as I observed before, it is a disadvantage if a legislative settlement is not in accordance with natural impressions, and the *onus probandi* is always on those who say that acts apparently harmless are very hurtful. With a criticism on the arguments by which this opinion is sought to be made out, I shall venture soon to trouble you.

"I am, yours obediently,

"A BANKER.

"*3rd February*, 1857."

This letter made its mark, eliciting the following letter from Lord Radnor—whose interest in the journal of free trade remained unabated since he and my father had invented the scheme of the *Economist*.

"COLESHILL HOUSE,

"HIGHWORTH, *8th February*, 1857.

"Lord Radnor trusts that 'A Banker' will not think him impertinent, if he offers the expression of his great satisfaction at the perusal of the letter in the *Economist* of last night.

"It appears to Lord Radnor that to treat the subject of the Bank Charter Bill in the mere pettyfogging style of ——'s speech is simply ridiculous, and that the time is come when the question of Banking and of the right to issue notes, should be put on a fixed and intelligible basis consistent with the immutable principles of justice, public convenience, and political economy.

"Other questions of great importance both to the Bank and

the community, ought (as it appears to Lord Radnor) now to be settled: *e.g.* its freedom from, or connection with the Government: its duties, whether due in the first place to the public, or to the proprietors of stocks; its functions as Banker of the State, and as Manager of the Public Debts Monopoly.

"Lord Radnor hopes that if 'A Banker' agrees with him, he will not omit to urge these topics in the same forcible manner. Lord Radnor has many apologies to offer for this intrusion."

Very shortly after my father's arrival in London Walter dined at our London house, 15 Hertford Street, Mayfair, where we lived during seventeen years when in London, and where I was born. This house had a special interest for my father, because Lord Grey, the statesman who greatly helped to pass the Reform Bill of 1832, had been born in it.

That week-end visit to Claverton resulted in a momentous change in Walter Bagehot's life, and was to prove a fresh starting-point for him. The *milieu* into which he then entered was a new experience. He was introduced into the inner circle of political life, and was to make personal friends of some of the prominent men in this circle. Vividly alive to all stirring influences in social and public life, he had not yet tasted a full draught in that big world of London, in which life, in all directions, is filled up to the brim. His surroundings had not, except from an intellectual point of view, been such as to widen his outlook on Society. Bagehot's visit to Claverton brought him personally into intimate contact with my father, one of the foremost leaders of the Free-Trade movement, and a member of the Government. He found a social life full of swing and vivacity, with notable people coming and going, a family of six sisters with whom he at once made friends,—all the more eagerly, perhaps, because he had never had sisters of his own. Mr. W. R. Greg almost lived with us at that time, and by his intellectual gifts and singularly pleasant manners added much to the charm of the life we were then leading; also Mr. Hutton, editor of the *Economist*, and Bagehot's greatest friend, was constantly on the scene. From a mere acquaintance Mr. Hutton soon became one of our dearest friends. His friendship for my sisters, Mrs.

Bagehot and Mrs. Greg and for myself, was felt, up to the day of his death, to be one of those strong props in life which never failed us. The fact that Walter Bagehot found, when he first came to Claverton, an intimate acquaintanceship existing between my father and this, his closest friend, naturally quickened his intimacy with us.

Claverton itself was an appropriate alighting spot for one who has become famous as a writer. It had notable literary associations. It was classic ground haunted by the memories of many great people who had come there as guests of Ralph Allen.[1]

The only remnants of the large "Gothic Mansion renowned in the Civil Wars" which now exist are the level grass site on which it stood, and the beautiful terraces and flights of steps in front. These remain intact, flanked on one side by the old church and on the other by the gardener's pretty gabled cottage. The newer house on the hill is large, commodious, but architecturally uninteresting. When we lived there it contained a fine library, especially rich in illustrated works, from which I gathered my first knowledge of the treasures to be found in the great galleries of Europe. There was also a picture-gallery, used as a billiard-room, where hung Sir Joshua Reynolds' "Puck," a life-sized three-quarter figure by Paul Veronese, and some notable Dutch paintings.

[1] In Mr. Skrine's *Rivers of England* he describes Claverton as it was in Ralph Allen's day: "About midway in this ascent, overlooking Warleigh and the river, the pleasing village of Claverton seems to hang, suspended, where its large gothic mansion (renowned in the Civil War) and its little Church, with the pyramidical tomb of the late much esteemed Mr. Allen, are striking objects". Mr. Graves the Rector of Claverton from 1750 to 1800 in his account of this notable person writes: "After Mr. Allen had purchased Claverton in the year 1758 from Mr. Skrine" (his descendant bought it back shortly after my father went to India), "he was so much pleased with the romantic situation, and with the Manor House, that he brought most of his company to see it; and generally dined there once a week". This "company" who visited Ralph Allen included Pope who "was almost a constant inmate of the family during the Bath Season for many years," Fielding, Hurd, Dr. Warburton Bishop of Gloucester, and the great Pitt, and many other people of note. Pitt wrote of Allen: "No incident can make the least change in the honour and love I bear him, or in the justice my heart does to his humane and benevolent virtues".

Of the season of 1857 in London and Walter's visits to Hertford Street I have no personal recollection, the sister next to me and I being left with the "Egg" at Claverton. In the *Life, Letters and Journals of George Ticknor*, the American, there is a description of a small dinner-party in Hertford Street when Walter was one of the guests.

"I dined with Mr. Wilson, a member of Parliament, Financial Secretary of the Treasury; owner, and formerly editor, of the *Economist*, and the person on whom the Government depends in questions of banking and finance. He never reads a book; he gets all his knowledge from documents and conversation, as Greg tells me—that is, at first-hand. But he talks uncommonly well on all subjects; strongly, and with a kind of original force, that you rarely witness. He has a young wife, and three nice, grown-up daughters, who, with Greg, a barrister [Walter Bagehot] whose name I did not get —one other person and myself, filled up a very luxurious table, as far as eating and drinking are concerned. And who do you think that other person was? Nobody less than Madame Mohl; who talked as fast and as amusingly as ever, full of good-natured kindness, with a little sub-acid as usual, to give it a good flavour. The young ladies, Greg accounts among the most intelligent of his acquaintance, and they certainly talk French as few English girls can, for De Tocqueville came in after dinner, and we all changed language at once, except the master, who evidently has but one tongue in his head, and needs but one, considering the strong use he makes of it." It may have been true that my father at that time had not time to read a book, but in his boyhood and youth he was a voracious reader.

It was after the family returned to Claverton early in August that the courting began in real earnest. Walter was constantly coming and going, and every visit brought the climax nearer. Much vitality prevailed in our family life in those Claverton and Hertford Street days, vitality of many kinds—social, literary, political, artistic. There was a great deal of riding, a great deal of reading, a great deal of music, a great many visitors. Instigated by Mr. Greg, my elder sisters,

chiefly my sister Julia, afterwards Mrs. Greg, wrote reviews of books in the *Economist* and in the *National Review*. My mother was a good musician, and having studied in Germany, we were perhaps more musician-like in our performances than many amateurs of that day. We all played the piano, my sister Matilda (Mrs. Horan) and I played the harp, and we all sang. My father was very fond of music, and also of pictures: I was always drawing. From childhood I was always at it in one form or another. In those days a master came out from Bath to teach me "the touch for an oak—ditto for a beech—ditto for a chestnut tree"— and such like theoretic interpretations of foliage.

The source of all this vitality was my father. In looking back to that past—and I think without partiality I may say it, my father possessed more than any one I ever met that special genius which instinctively discovers how to make something good for others as well as for itself out of every moment of life. I can only think of one person who possessed a like passion for work, the same fervour with which my father tackled the labour, however arduous, involved in carrying out everything he undertook to do, and the same delightful social qualities. That person was a friend of later days, Lord Leighton. Both had the same staying power, the same indomitable energy. Both my father and Leighton revelled in work. It was said of my father when he was Financial Secretary of the Treasury, that he spoilt all the clerks in the department because he did half their work for them.

In his memoir of my father, Walter Bagehot writes: "In the country, where his habits were necessarily more obvious, he habitually spent the whole day from eleven till eight, with some slight interval for a short ride in the middle of the day, over his Treasury bag; and as such was his notion of holiday, it may be easily conceived that in London, when he had still more to do in a morning, and had to spend almost every evening in the House of Commons, his work was greater than an ordinary constitution could have borne. And it was work of a rather peculiar kind. Some men of routine habits spend many hours over their work, but do not labour very intensely

at one time; other men of more excitable natures work impulsively, and clear off everything they do by eager efforts in a short time. But Mr. Wilson in some sense did both. Although his hours of labour were so very protracted, yet if a casual observer happened to enter his library at any moment, he would find him with his blind down to exclude all objects of external interest, his brow working eagerly, his eye fixed intently on the figures before him, and, very likely, his rapid pen passing fluently over the paper. He had all the labour of the chronic worker, and all the labour of the impulsive worker too. And those admitted to his intimacy used to wonder that he was never tired. He came out of his library in an evening more ready for vigorous conversation—more alive to all subjects of daily interest, more quick to gain new information—more ready to expound complicated topics, than others who had only passed an easy day of idleness or ordinary exertion."

My father's natural gifts, together with an earnest, delightful nature, and the influence of his official position, made our home attractive to various kinds of interesting people. Walter Bagehot, among the number, found in its atmosphere stimulating conditions, besides the special charm which, from his first visit, my sister had inspired. It seems on looking back a little curious that a person of his notable ability and twice our age should have been treated by us of the schoolroom with so little awe. One explanation for this seeming irreverence lies in the fact, I believe, that my father's personal influence so completely placed him in the position of great Llama with all his surroundings—without his meaning in the least to occupy such a position—that every one of the family and those who shared the intimate family life, such as Walter Bagehot, Mr. Hutton and Mr. Greg, gathered as mere satellites round a greater centre luminary. There was also Walter's own strong repugnance to "mounting the camel" in any sense whatever. Never was there any person as wise and good as he, who more instinctively objected to posing as a "superior person". As a family we interested him, and our lives were brightened, our interests intensified,

and our horizon widened, by his becoming one of us. It may easily be imagined how great a gain was the invasion of such a brother, at once a sage, a wit, and a boy, into the home life of six hitherto brotherless sisters. He came and went, each time becoming more intimate. Long rides on the downs, long walks were taken; but for the walks a donkey had to be provided for my sister who was the heroine of the situation. She was not strong enough to walk far. Walter, in order to secure a *tête-à-tête* with her, was observed by the vigilant eyes of her younger sisters to kick this donkey and make it trot on beyond the walkers. I, as the chief artist in the family, immortalised one of these walks on the Claverton Downs by drawing a caricature in water-colour which exists unto this day. When shown to him at the time, it had a depressing effect upon the aspirant. He feared he had not much chance if my sister did not mind this, to him, anxious—almost solemn situation—being caricatured. He was desperately, poetically in love. My father had always been jealous of any one who seemed likely to rob him of a daughter, and though he entirely approved (theoretically) of Walter Bagehot as a son-in-law, the idea of one of his daughters leaving him made him ill. On the 5th November the proposal took place, but the answer was not given till three days later in London, where my mother and my two sisters, Eliza and Sophie went, *en route* for Edinburgh. A certain Dr. Beveridge, one of the first believers in massage, had been recommended by Lady Kinnaird as likely to cure my two sisters of ailments with which they were troubled, so to Dr. Beveridge at Edinburgh they went for three months.

I remember well the day of the proposal. I do not think any event, previous or subsequent, produced so much excitement among us. The news was brought up to the schoolroom by my sister Zoë, and we sat on the piano and talked!—talked!—talked! The "Egg" had returned to Germany and we were pursuing, or *not* pursuing, our studies by ourselves, certain remote professors in Bath being supposed to fill the gap.

On the 7th November, 1858, at 10 o'clock A.M. in the dining-room of 15 Hertford Steet, Mayfair, my sister and Walter

Sketch from memory of Elizabeth Wilson
by her sister Emilie J. Wilson

Bagehot were engaged. He breakfasted with my father and sisters, then rushed off to Mr. Hutton with the good news. Mr. Hutton called the same morning to congratulate.

My sister's diary relates :—

"11*th November*.—Got a letter from Mr. Bagehot (my first) from Langport, saying he was to return to London to-morrow morning to watch the crisis. Sent an answer to the Queen's Hotel."

"12*th November*.—Papa had a letter from Mr. Bagehot's father and one from himself, the latter to thank him for the trust reposed in him. He came by morning express and called on Papa at the Treasury. He came to see me at 6 o'clock, and we talked together till dinner-time. He brought me *Selections from Wordsworth*. Mamma and Sophie went to the English Opera at the Lyceum. Papa did not come to dinner till 8.30, having been busy about the crisis. The Government sent letters to the Bank suspending Sir Robert Peel's Bank Act of 1844. The Deputy Governor of the Bank of England called to discuss matters with Papa at 10 P.M."

"14*th November*.—Mr. Bagehot came at 4. I introduced him to Susan.[1] He read me Wordsworth's 'Lord Clifford' and we had a very long talk after dinner. Mr. Hutton dined with us and told Mr. Bagehot in walking home that he is engaged to Miss Roscoe, a cousin of his first wife."

"17*th November*.—Mr. Bagehot came at 9 and breakfasted with us and went with us to the station at 10.30—he and I together. Papa and Mr. Bagehot went to the British Museum after seeing us off to Scotland, to see the new reading-room and the new fragments of ancient statues from Halicarnassus."

In this Victorian-era fashion were Walter Bagehot and Elizabeth Wilson betrothed. A fashion earnest, deliberate, closely under the chaperonage of parents, none the less exciting —thrillingly so—to all therein concerned.

The following quotations are from Walter Bagehot's letters to my sister while she was in Edinburgh. The first written from Langport on the 10th November, began : "I have just

[1] Our old nurse who lived in the family for fifty-three years, and died at Herd's Hill in 1885.

rushed down here from Bristol and it appears to me that I shall rebound again to London to-morrow. I rather fancy I shall have to stay some days there, as the panic is getting worse and requires watching. . . . I cannot be in a panic at all myself. I have never felt such happiness as for the last two days, ever since our first walk in the *Cemetery* [Walter's name for Hamilton Gardens]. . . . I do not quite believe in my happiness yet, one requires detail to make one believe in anything so strange. . . ."

Eight days later he writes from Yeovil: ". . . What do you think your father and myself did the moment you were gone? We went to see the antiquities of Halicarnassus!! They are a set of odd legs and bodies of great statues just arrived, and they alleviated our feelings very much. It happened in this way. We drove past the British Museum on our way home, and Mr. Wilson asked if I had seen the new reading-room, and as I had not, he forthwith took me to see it. We were ushered into old Panizzi who was doing nothing in a fine arm-chair, and he proposed we should see the venerable fragments just arrived from Greece. I am not sure, however, that we appreciated them. I have an unfortunate prejudice in favour of statues in one piece—at least in not more than six pieces, and these are broken up very small indeed—and it is a controversy whose arm belongs to whose body; but I believe real lovers of art admire these perplexities. On the whole, however, we spent our hour cheerfully, and, in consequence, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and a heap of Scotch bankers were kept half an hour waiting. Seriously I felt pretty well although you were gone. I am so soothed by the last week . . . and it is such a rest. I believe too I am a little tired. The affections are always fatiguing; then there is the panic which is wearing, and really a trifle anxious, and your father's conversation, and what I guess from it, lets me into the interior of matters in which I am so much interested that currency becomes an excitement, and altogether I am pleasingly tired, and though I think of you very much, about two minutes in three, it is nicely and mildly. I must brace myself more to my work in the morning, however, for it won't do to be always thinking

of our drive to the station and the fireside in Hertford Street. . . .

"Mr. Moffatt gave us a grand dinner, capital wine and excellent food. We talked currency till half-past one and then Mr. Wilson and myself walked to Hertford Street, and stood on the door-step ever so long talking of Michel Chevallier and the double standard in France. Mr. Moffatt is a sensible man, acquainted with money, and was really interested in what he was saying. There were only five of us, and a small party is always pleasanter. Mr. Robert Lowe, and the American Banker were the others; the latter was instructive. Mr. Lowe said he disapproved of subscriptions for widows. He thought they had better means of getting on than any one else, if they were proper people to keep alive, which I mention to you as a characteristic expression of the 'masculine element'.

"I came down here (Yeovil) by the evening express to see one of my partners in the bank who lives here, named Batten, who would amuse you. . . . He is an intimate friend of mine. . . . Does the doctor seem a human being? I hate him. He will try to keep you in Edinburgh under pretence of curing you."

On the 19th November he writes:—

". . . I do not believe much in your being ill. I think you are jaded and want to have rubbish talked to you (as you seem to like it, which is odd), but as you do like it, it is better than being rubbed. Is the physician a sensible man out of physic? One can't judge of drugs, but of common sense one can, and all professional people should be judged of by that test. The papers say Mr. Wilson is going to Devonport next week. He evidently did not intend going when I left town. He puts the worst on the crisis as an excuse. It is spreading and widening, but less intense at the focus in London. It is utterly useless giving your message to my mother, though I will do so. She believes you must mean to break off the engagement or you would never have gone to Edinburgh. I agree with her, but it produces no effect. I thought of you all day yesterday under the pretence of a day's hunt with very little sport. During a run your image waned, but returned at

the decease of the hare. There is no time for quiet reflection like the intervals of the hunt and I was so happy. . . .

"My spirits always make me cheerful in a superficial way, but they do not satisfy, and somehow life, even before I was engaged to you, was sweeter and gentler, and the jars and jangles of action lost their influence, and literature had a new value since you liked my writing, and everything has had a gloss upon it, though I have come to Claverton the last few times with the notion that the gloss would go, that I should burst out, and you would be tranquil and kind and considerate, and refuse, and I should never see you again. I had a vision of the thing which I keep by me. As it has not happened I am afraid this is egotistical, indeed I know it is, but I am not sure that egotism is bad in letters, and if I write to you I *must* write about what I feel for you. . . .

"To change the subject. What is the particular advantage of being rubbed at *Edinburgh?* Since writing yesterday I have made careful inquiries and am assured that the English can rub. Why not be rubbed in Somerset? Let the doctor *mark the place* and have a *patch put to show where*, and let an able-bodied person in the West of England rub on the *same* place and surely it will be as well? Does the man's touch do good to disease like the King's?

"By incredible researches in an old box I have found the poem I mentioned to you. I wish I had not, for I thought it was better. I have not seen it for several years, and it is not so good as I fancied, perhaps not good at all, but I *think* you may care to read it. The young lady's name is Orithyia. The Greek legend is that she was carried away by the north wind. I have chosen to believe she was in love with the north wind, but I am not aware that she ever declared her feelings explicitly in any document. By the way, you have. I have just read your letter in that light, and I go about murmuring 'I have made that dignified person commit herself. I have, I have,' and then I vault over the sofa with exultation. Those are the feelings of the person you have connected yourself with. *Please* do not be offended at my rubbish. Sauciness is my particular line. I am always rude to everybody I respect.

I could write to you of the deep and serious feelings which I hope you believe really are in my heart, but my pen jests of itself and always will. . . .

"I hope the doctor does not think there is anything seriously the matter with your sister. Do not let him do much to her. I am more afraid of remedies than of diseases. . . .

"Enclosed in this letter is the poem 'Orithyia'."

ORITHYIA.

What am I and where am I?
Why do I leave the city of my youth,
And the sweet streets where linger all I know,
And the fair home where I have lived and loved?
To mark how on Hissus gentle face
The eager north wind venteth his quick will,
Or how the long ribbed plane leaves vex the air,
And how subtle and calm the light clouds hang
In amorous poise upon the breath that wafts them?

I do remember me that in my youth
I strayed, where in Aeropolis the hills
Regard Eubœa, and the sweet air was hushed,
The distant waves Æolian music made,
The very hills were faint as the next world,
And all things murmured. Yet there was nought.
But all at once the breeze began to murmur
'Orithyia,' and the calm hills remurmured
'Orithyia,' and the fair waves re-echoed
'Orithyia,' and in their hollow throat
The caves half muttered 'Orithyia';
Yet there was nothing save a too deep calm,
An overfulness and a weight in air—
Since then I have not loved what maidens love,
To me the winding dance, the hasteful words,
The gentle music and the gentler home,
The tranquil evening and the pleasant morn,
The flexile fancies and the talk of friends,
The converse low and sweet in evening time,
The taskless work and busy rest were nought,
Nor all the homely harmony of life.
Nor them that fain would love me could I love,
For ever unto me mine own heart seemed
Too awful to be spent on things of earth,
But walked I sole and consecrate, as doth

The moon in heaven. Yet were there longings strange.
Such as with lisping tongues of half-formed waves
The tranquil sea doth utter in its musing.
Longings for one immortal whom I knew
And yet knew not. And so in sooth *was* all.
Now I awake. The dream of this world ends,
A thickening cloud o'er-shadows all the world,
A mind is in the air :—for I am called.
At once a sudden thrill shakes earth and heaven
For He who rules the awful air doth call me.
Boreas, I come, I come, I pant and pause,
I faint, press on, and pause ; for what am I
That He who rules the awful air should love me ?
Yet He hath called me twice and now again,—
My shaking eyes turn dim ; my breath beat thick ;
And all my breast is filled with subtle love,—
Boreas, I come, I come.

Again on the 25th November he attacks the "rubbing".

"I do not like this about gaslight, and you may depend upon it the horrid dullness you describe is exactly what you ought not to have. What is life worth relieved only by a piano? If you must not come home by yourself why not come home with Susan? I do not believe in patent rubbing. Anybody can rub. Perhaps Scotch hands are larger, but I doubt that being an advantage. What does your sister Julia mean by your being spoilt? It is all rubbish, you want to be made much off, . . . and you go away to a back street by a boys' school and hope to be comforted by a *piano* and the wife of a Lord Advocate!!"

"CLAVERTON,
"*29th November*, 1857.

". . . I came over here yesterday. Everything in its usual channel. The only event which has occurred is that your sister Emilie dined yesterday, and naturally insisted that Jetty should dine in public also, which Mr. Wilson forbad and this cast a momentary shade on life, but it is gone now.[1] I think I have distinguished myself about money. I wrote a letter in the *Economist* four columns of leader type. Every-

[1] "Jetty" was my inseparable, a black-and-tan toy terrier. I knew at the time that Walter took my part, he always took the part of children.

thing was postponed to it—an article of Mr. Wilson's (!!)—one of Hutton's; and something else. Your father seemed to like it, and Greg said, 'Better than any of your literary things, Bagehot?' which is paying a compliment and spoiling it rather.

". . . I am going over to Claverton this afternoon. You seem to me very poorly. You may depend on it no remedies will do you the least good unless you are in the midst of cheerful associations and society. Your prospects do not seem cheerful. I shall speak to your sister Julia. I have some hope she could arrange your coming home. You can obey Mr. Beveridge's directions anywhere surely. He won't admit that of course, and will have endless learned reasons, because he will be paid if you stay, and have nothing if you go; but you must allow for these obliquities in the greatest scientific constitutions."

". . . I think I should warn you that in practical things I have rather an anxious disposition. I am cheerful but not sanguine. I can make the best of anything, but I have a difficulty in expecting that the future will be very good. The most successful men of action rather overestimate their chances of success in action. I cannot do this at all. I have always to work in the bare cold probability. My energy is fair and my spirits very good, but this difficulty of intellect I have always had. If you *will* soothe me in this it will be almost too great happiness, though you are a little anxious naturally too. Still we will have headaches in life together, and that will be to me immense. Talking of headaches, I cannot be reconciled to your staying in Edinburgh. I am rather learned in head complaints from my own experience. My impression is that they are half in the mind, and that cheerful, easy excitement is better for them than anything else, and you are quite out of the way of that. . . . What do you think of my verses? You are not obliged to like them. They entirely represent my *past* self. I read them as if another person had written them. Do they seem to you like mine?"

"Herd's Hill,
"*4th December*, 1857.

". . . Everything seems very quiet. I really think in about a week I could run up to Edinburgh, even if you are

cured by Christmas which you *must* be. I have no faith in Mr. Beveridge, but some faith in your faith in him. All these head diseases are somewhat in the mind, at least I found it so, and if you believe he is doing you good he will do you good; but the great thing is that you should be *happy*. . . . I admire your talking about my choice? Young ladies should not let their hair fly in the wind; that was the original beginning.[1] Seriously, it is not right to talk so. I feel my whole being drawn towards you, not by my own will, but some other and unexpressible way as I believe by a power greater than either of us. . . ."

Walter—still Mr. Bagehot in the Diary—joined my mother and sisters in Edinburgh on 13th December, and on the 16th, my sister's birthday, he presented her with eight volumes bound in red leather, containing the poetry of Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats, and on that same day engagement rings were exchanged. My father arrived in Edinburgh on the day of these events; having been kept in London on account of the crisis. While in Edinburgh, Walter was occupied in writing his article on this crisis for the *National Review*.

During this winter Walter Bagehot put together his early essays and brought them out in a volume, calling them *Estimates of some Englishmen and Scotchmen*. He wrote to my sister:—

"I am very glad I decided on reprinting my essays for your sake, because they will help you to understand my mind better than anything else. You may consider the book in the nature of a 'love letter'. It never would have been put together but from a floating idea that perhaps you might read it and perhaps you might like me better for it. We shall see. I am afraid I am callous, possibly proud, and do not care for mere general reputation. Of course it would be a pleasure if it should come, but it is a thing which no sane man ought to make necessary to his happiness, or think of it but as a temporary luxury, even if it should come to him. First rate fame—the fame of great productive artists—is a matter of ultimate certainty,

[1] During a ride to Orchardleigh my sister's hair came down, and made Walter aware of the fact that he was in love.

but no other fame is. Posterity cannot take up little people, there are so many of them. *Reputation* must be acquired at the moment and the circumstances of the moment are matters of accident. In my case I have had a good deal of newspaper praise for these essays, at least for some of them—when they first came out, and I must expect very little more. Besides I know they will be abused and by whom; and if one puts aside unfavourable criticisms in newspapers carelessly, one has scarcely a right to set much store by the favourable ones. I do care, however, a good deal for some kind of reputation. In proof of which I send you a letter we received in the course of the *National Review* operations from Matthew Arnold. We wrote to him to ask him to write on Béranger, and I kept his answer which is *wholly* unprecedented with me. It gave me a good deal of pleasure, as he is rather a severe judge of poetical criticism, and I will *give* it to *you*."

Enclosed was the following letter from Matthew Arnold :—

"WHARFESIDE, OTLEY,
"YORKSHIRE, *27th October*, 1856.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I beg to thank you most warmly for your flattering proposals: I assure you the subject tempts me so much that the rate of remuneration would weigh very little with me in deciding whether to try it or not: but the real truth is I am so much occupied that I feel I could not do justice either to your Review or to myself by any article which I could produce for you under my present circumstances. I am therefore compelled gratefully to decline this offer from you as I have declined similar offers from others; but perhaps you will allow me to say that I have been so much interested by your Review that it is with unusual reluctance that I forego the opportunity which you kindly extend to me of contributing to it. It was only a day or two ago that I read the article on Shelley in the last number; that article and one or two others (in which I imagine that I trace the same hand) seem to me to be of the very first quality, showing not talent only, but a concern for the *simple truth* which is rare in English literature as it is in English politics and English religion—whatever zeal, vanity

and ability may be exhibited by the performers in each of these three spheres.

"Believe me, my dear Sir, in much haste,

"Your faithful and obliged servant,

"M. ARNOLD.

"R. H. HUTTON, ESQ."

Addressed to
Rosse Priory
(Lord Kinnaird's).

"LANGPORT,
"*8th January*, 1858.

". . . I am glad beyond measure to hear you are better. I think it is my going away, just as Mr. Beveridge's patients are benefited principally after they leave him. I wish you would soon adopt that course. Is it not Lady Kinnaird whom he cured afterwards by magic at a great distance? You should inquire into it now you are staying with her. I am quite ready to believe in him if he will cure you in Somerset. I am glad you like Matthew Arnold's letter. I am reading his new tragedy which is clever, but too much 'high art,' and not addressed enough to the common feelings and minds of ordinary people. I used to tell Clough he believed legibility to be a defect, and I am sure the high art criticism and practice tend steadily in that direction. Possibly my essay being a trifle dull was the reason M. Arnold liked it."

". . . All the 'hymeneal arrangements' are quite in your hands. I insist on your being married yourself, on this point I shall be firm; but as to the rest you may be quite despotic. . . . I have no clerical friend whom I at all care to ask to marry me. I have only one very intimate one at all now, and he lives in Rutlandshire, which is a good way from Claverton; and he is not nearly so episcopal looking as you describe your uncle to be. I have only one cousin I care to ask, if I may, to be your bridesmaid. Her name is Mary Watson Bagehot.[1]

"I am very glad you can think of me in beautiful scenery. I do not quite see the connection of ideas, still I am very glad

[1] Mrs. Schwann, daughter of Mr. Edward Bagehot.

there is a connection. I have never seen Perthshire, as I went from Aberdeen to Edinburgh by the packet, being in a hurry. I like the Scotch scenery very much, it is such rough simple beauty. Possibly Perthshire may be more cultivated, but in the part I have seen the elements of beauty are the simplest imaginable; heather, rude hills and rough stones; and yet, with the deep colours which pass over them the fascination is very great."

"LOMBARD STREET,
"*15th January.*

". . . I had a pleasant evening at Wimbledon last night. The only defect was that Mr. Greg has gone into captivity to an over-fascinating woman, a Mrs. ——. She has been a professional beauty and appeared in a nocturnal sort of silk robe surmounted by a red head-dress. She had taken to *mind* on the waning of her exterior charms, and is a friend of Tennyson's and talks of 'sweet ideas' and 'hard facts'. Greg went into utter captivity to her and she seems a lion in the Putney suburb. I came up with Clough in the train and asked him if he knew her, and he made an excruciating face, and said: 'I believe there *is* a woman'. Her husband was an influential member of council at Calcutta, a much better sort of creature with white hair. I liked Miss Greg the aged, very much" [the Aunt Sally who presided over Mr. Greg's home]. "There is a homely narrowness about her which is pleasant. She has not over-civilised away her character. . . . FitzJames Stephen was there. He was pleasant; he is angular and has a rather aggressive development of conscience, but he talks sense and is agreeable. Greg, of course, was most genial himself."

"LANGPORT,
"*17th January*, 1858.

". . . I admire your defending the 'charming' Mrs. —— [Mr. Greg's friend]. I am sure you would not like her. You must not expect me to believe in the universal perfection of ladies. Some, I will always maintain, to be utter humbugs. Mrs. —— is, I assure you. She is not clever. She pays attention to clever men; she strokes their minds soothingly and ingeniously, but that is all. She has been very pretty and

you know my strong preference for pretty people, and you ought to know my intense love for one thing, deep mind. . . .[1] I like very much that you are to have Greg's daughter for one of your bridesmaids. You might tell him sometime how grateful I am to him for bringing me to Claverton. I never should be able to get it out, if I saw him daily all my life.

"I am very glad the incrustation on the bones of the neck, which is clever enough to appear in the eyes, has been removed; nobody could be happy with such a subtle clever thing about them. I am also rejoiced that there is to be a rubber in London, that if you retain your affectionate sentiment for this alleviation you may obtain it within rational limits. If you are right and headaches can be cured in this way, friction will become ubiquitous; small boy at every corner (like the shoe cleaners) will call out, 'Rub your neck, sir, rub your neck!' and all the world will be rubbed. By the interest and talk that are spent on your trousseau you seem to be likely to have apparel now which will be enough till the end of your life. I approve of this as I shall save by it. Let me advise enduring materials (canvas, I am assured, wears well), at any rate, if that is not lady-like, which I am too ignorant to be quite sure of, something which will stand the wear and tear of life. It would be pitiable to be found in old age with only gossamer (what is gossamer?) gowns. I must go to bed now, as it is past one in the morning, and I have to hunt. I have not been out since I returned from Edinburgh and the duties of our life must be done. You must not think because I write cheerfully that I do not feel an immense deal your staying away.

[1] This poor lady who Walter criticised so severely, was treated in like manner by his friend Mr. Hutton, as well as by Arthur Clough. Mr. Hutton wrote a nonsense verse about her which I illustrated :—

"There was an old lady of Putney,
Who looked as if she would butt me;
She came with a rush and a passionate gush,
That ecstatic old lady of Putney."

This aversion was a typical example of an inveterate antipathy which Mr. Hutton, Mr. Clough, Walter Bagehot and other men of their set entertained towards a certain flashy form of insincerity.

". . . I have been reading *The Three Clerks* (Anthony Trollope's) in scraps here and there when I could catch hold of the volume. It is not nearly so clever as *Barchester Towers* on the whole, and is very unmethodically written, or rather, I fear, it is written on the commercial method, whole dissertations and irrelevant reflections being inserted to make up three volumes; still there are some very clever things. There is a very nice girl of sixteen, not the least dignified, who falls in love with a not very steady young gentleman, and then wastes away, and goes to Torquay because he has debts, etc. I have always liked to read about women suffering—that is young women. They stand up in a ball-room and irritate you with a petty, futile happiness which is most offensive, and besides they inflict at times such endless pain, that it is right they should suffer in their turn. Possibly it may not be the same people who inflict the suffering that endure it, but in a large universe like this we must not expect a very exact nicety; which 'blue and pink girl' suffers does not much matter, you will agree with me. I dare say the fates impending justice did not know them apart. I never could at all.

"The crisis is all over and everybody has too much money. It is really a very ridiculous world. The last few times I have been here everybody was on their knees asking for money—now you have nearly to go on your knees to ask people to take it. Neither of these two extremes is very pleasant."

". . . I am very proud naturally and nothing has ever really humbled me before. All my million deficiencies and failings constantly rise up before me. . . . I have not, I know, a good mind, but I have, I think, a firm and true one in its real depths. The expression which seems to express what I feel in contrast with last year is the phrase of the Bible, if one might use it, 'a new heart'. I did not think I could have such feelings."

"21*st January*, 1858.

". . . I was much pleased with Sir C. Lewis's remark [1] and more at your being pleased with it. The *Times* says, Mr. J.

[1] Sir George Cornewall Lewis had written to my father saying that the article in the *National Review* (Bagehot's) was the only good one he had seen on *the Crisis*.

Wilson, M.P., Mrs. Wilson, Misses Wilson (two) were at the State Ball last night. You have not stolen to town without telling me, or did you obey Her Majesty's summons by telegraph? . . .

"There are reviews of my essays in the *Press* and the *Spectator*, the latter only a short notice, as they say its contents will be fresh in people's minds, which is a compliment as implying that one is read and remembered. The *Press* says I am 'childish and indescribably trivial'. This is fame, you observe, that enlightened appreciation for which authors long. I am much afraid Hutton will out-Herod Herod about me in the *Economist*. I can't say I think my book will begin a new era at all, though the covers are very good and the type is so too."

"I want to take Bella Vista. I am sure it will do for us. The house stands in, or rather on the edge of, a firwood, belonging to Sir A. Elton, which looks as if it belonged to Bella Vista, but does not. The view is really lovely, and so are the walks in almost every direction, and the beauties are quite near. Although Clevedon, which is a little watering-place stuck on to a very little old village is near, you are quite in the country as much as at Claverton. Inside the rooms are small and an immense number of them; in fact it is a minced house, and it would not do for persons who wished to give enormous entertainments. . . . There is a half tower at the top of the house from which the view is really wonderful.

"[Part missed out] I never saw any love letters in real life scarcely, but I am sure it is natural for those who stand in the relation we do to pour out our hearts to each other quite simply and as the words come. I believe what seems to others very silly love letters often do this to the persons concerned, though there is no meaning in the words in themselves or to others. To be able to express deep feeling rationally and yet adequately is a very rare gift, and it is better to utter it irrationally and at the risk of ridicule than not to utter it at all. I am sure you won't complain of my letters being neat or elaborate. I feel you would know they were not thorough letters of mine if they were so. They would be uncharacteristic."

"*12th February.*

". . . I hope you enjoyed Lady Palmerston's. It is all nonsense or morbidness, as you say, to call the world all hollow. It is an object of the greatest *intellectual* interest to those who have the mind and opportunity to study it. The mistake is to treat it as giving more than any intellectual interest ever can. The deepest part of the soul after a little revolts at anything merely intellectual. Such things seem trivial and unworthy when forced on us as substitutes for what is deeper. It is amusing that I should explain to you the charm of the world. It is horribly against my own interest, but I have a certain abstract love of truth which is much in the way."

On 18th February the travellers returned to Claverton after stopping in London to buy the then *de rigueur* dressing-case, and to order the trousseau. Walter appeared at Claverton on the 19th. Constant visits followed, and discussions on the preparations for the wedding were interlarded with readings of Shelley, of the essay by Walter on Bishop Butler, battledore and shuttlecock, riding, music, and whist. Cup-and-ball was Walter's favourite game. How distinctly I see him now steadying the ball while gazing at it sideways very intently with his large round black eyes, an eye-glass stuck in one. He was thirty-two years of age, but he still had a boy's keen zest in playing certain games, as he had also in riding, in hunting, and in playing cards. He rather scorned the view most of us took of cards, the indifference we showed as to whether we lost or won. One of my sisters he thought it worth while playing with, as she had the true gambler's spirit. Her temper was affected when she lost. "It was of no use," Walter would say, "to play with people callous as to whether their cards are good or bad."

From 51 Lombard Street, on 24th February, 1858, Walter writes: "I am amused at your finding a difficulty in writing to me at Claverton. Living in the sisterly world brings back all your old ideas and associations, and you have had no time at home as yet to get used to it. I quite feel as you do about general events. Real affection enters into our background of thought and heart. I confess to not caring as I used to do

about the change of administration.[1] I used to care more than suited the principles I used to maintain. I had a theory that one ought to attend almost exclusively to affairs around one. I used to say 'I did not care how many wives the King of Siam had. I could not help him.' Still until quite lately I did care about public matters an immense deal, and it seems to me quite strange that I do not do so more. I breakfasted with Mr. Wilson this morning. He seemed to anticipate glory in opposition and to have a sensation of freedom in having to maintain only what it pleased him to maintain, and to have no official etiquette to restrain him; but he will feel the non-arrival of the Treasury bag in a Long Vacation, if Lord Derby could live so long. I cannot dream that he will, still the political world is so strange that no case is ever desperate. If the opposition did anything *factious*, he might rise in popularity and dissolve.

"I astonished a heap of people by saying with positiveness that the 21st of next month was on a Wednesday. I think about that day rather too much I fear for getting through my work on other days. I hope I shall have a line from you in the morning. You take up so *entirely* my imagination that my mind seems poor of all dodges and inventions about everything else."

During the weeks before his wedding day Walter was carrying on unremittingly the business of a banker at Bristol and Langport, thinking out original ideas in writing his essay on the "Waverley Novels" for the *National Review*, partly doing the work of editing the *Review*, settling the renting and furnishing of his future home, and—by his high spirits, wit, humour, and cordial comradeship, filling the position of an ideal future brother-in-law. This was a very animated comradeship with continual sallies of amusing criticism and undisturbing satire. Nothing he ever said could be resented. He always steered clear of the sensibilities that could get hurt. One of my sisters, whose guileless nature led her to be over-credulous at times, was inclined not only to theorise, but to take earnest flights in argument, starting from the ground

[1] On 25th February, 1858, Lord Derby replaced Lord Palmerston as Prime Minister.

of her own credulity, whereupon Walter would say, "—— ought to be put on the chimney piece". She was to be treated as an ornament, not seriously listened to. His own favourite seat was the china stove in the picture gallery looking down on to the billiard table where he would perch to read aloud to us poetry or prose; the *Saturday Review*, the *National Review*, anything that he wanted to read at the moment. Literature was a living companion to him, and his interest in it was contagious.

In Walter Bagehot's essay on the "Waverley Novels," written during those weeks, the kinship of his sympathies with those of Sir Walter Scott is evinced; the same "healthy and natural sense," the same fellow-feeling with the instinctive inclinations of men; understanding well both their wise and their unwise inclinations. Both were to the core *gentle*-men, with humanitarian and merciful consideration for the feeble as for the strong. Neither could have been beguiled by any passion of partisanship into believing that any permanent benefit can be bestowed on any human creature by riding rough-shod over the feelings, customs, or prejudices of even the most uncultured and unreasoning of classes. Of Scott's ideas of political economy Walter Bagehot writes that they "are equally characteristic of his strong sense and genial mind. He was always sneering at Adam Smith and telling many legends of that philosopher's absence of mind and inaptitude for the ordinary conduct of life. A contact with the Edinburgh logicians had doubtless not augmented his faith in the formal deductions of abstract economy; nevertheless, with the facts before him, he could give a very plain and satisfactory exposition of the genial consequences of old abuses, the distinct necessity for stern reform, and the delicate humanity requisite for introducing that reform temperately and with feeling;" then follows the quotation from *Guy Mannering* describing the ruthless way in which the Laird of Ellangowan commenced his magisterial reform and the disastrous effects which followed this riding rough-shod over the old customs and feelings of the peasant class.

It was settled that the future home was to be at Clevedon. As aforesaid, when a student at the Bristol College, Walter

went for week-ends to Clevedon on visits to certain cousins who lived there, and would write enthusiastic letters about the place to his parents. Sir Arthur Elton, the owner of Clevedon Court, a beautiful early fourteenth-century mansion under the hill, was a keen Liberal, and had sat at my father's feet when he first entered the House of Commons. Clevedon Court was haunted by associations with Arthur Hallam, who was a cousin of the Eltons, and with Tennyson and Thackeray. Arthur Hallam lies buried in the old Clevedon Church by the sea, still an out-of-the-world, solitary spot. A few wind-blown trees and an open down lead to the walls of cliff above the Severn. The waves on a stormy day attack their rocky sides; but the lonely twelfth-century building has resisted, steadfast and strong, against all hurricanes. In a side chapel lie the bones of the modern Jonathan who inspired the wail of passionate love and loss "In Memoriam".

The Danube to the Severn came
  The darkened heart that beat no more;
  They laid him by the pleasant shore,
And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills,
  The salt sea-water passes by,
  And hushes half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills.

Sir Arthur Elton had built a house near the top of the hill above Clevedon to resort to in the autumn when the fall of the leaf made it damp and misty in the valley below; but he only lived in it one winter and subsequently let it. It was conveniently placed between Claverton and Herd's Hill, the right sort of size—neither too large nor too small—so it was chosen for Walter and my sister's first home. With Sir Arthur Elton's permission, Walter changed the name from Bella Vista to The Arches, he having taken a fancy to the archways which supported the terrace running round two sides of the house.

The great event was fixed to take place on 21st April. My sister writes in her diary: "21st April. Our wedding day. Beautiful and hot. We started at 11.15. Church quite

full. Used our pew for vestry. Walked on lawn after church. Hanoverian band playing. We drove to Frome, changed horses and took up luggage and got to Stourton at 7. Had rooms at the Inn—had tea dinner. The *fête-champetre* at Claverton kept up till 9th October, over 200. Great fun."

It was not considered well for Mrs. Bagehot to attend so exciting a scene as Walter's wedding, and Mr. Bagehot had remained with her at Herd's Hill.

At Frome Walter posted a little letter written in pencil. (Post-mark) 21st April, Frome.

"FROME (*written in the carriage*).

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"*We* are married. Everything went off well and my wife sends her love.

"Yours with greatest affection,

"WALTER BAGEHOT."

Diary. "22nd April. Walter and I wandered into Sir H. Hoare's park morning—afternoon read poetry and drove at 4.30 through the woods to Alfred's Tower. Got out and looked over the country."

This Alfred's Tower is seen from the train between Frome and Bruton, reared high on a hill overlooking the woods of splendid timber in the grounds of Stourton, the property of the Hoares. The Cornish expresses now rush past it to and fro many times a day.

Another letter Walter wrote to his mother two days after the wedding :—

"STOURTON, 23*rd April*, 1858.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"You will, ere you receive this, have heard some account of my wedding from somebody. I sent you a note in pencil from Frome to say that it had been achieved. I am scarcely an impartial judge, but it seemed to me a very bright affair, and that not only the persons married, but the others enjoyed themselves which generally they do not. Nobody shed a tear—Eliza was a most composed bride—a little anxious

at the crisis, but very cheerful after it was over. Vincent Wood made a splendid 'best man,' only that the multitude *would* think he was the bridegroom. Mary (Walter's cousin) was much admired, and all the bridesmaids were very animated and nice. There was wonderful oratory at the breakfast. A Mr. Moffat, M.P. for Ashburton, proposed *our* health in a copious and *eloquent* manner, and spoke of the 'hundred of thousands' who had read my writings,—whom I myself should wish to see particularly. Sir William Topham proposed the health of the bridesmaids in a very clever speech in a sort of Lord Palmerston style. He is a man about the Court, Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard, and understands the 'touch and go' style of oratory rather well. My attention was rather distracted from what he said by wondering why '*that* man' should be speaking at *my* wedding. Few people seem so far off my beat. I believe the dance, etc., after we went away, was also successful, and the day was so gorgeous that I think it made people cheerful. Mind *will* tell in life *especially* in the *weather*. We had a delicious drive to this place, and have done nothing but potter about it ever since. Eliza is a trifle tired by the crisis, but very well and seems able to endure futurity. The post is going, so I must leave off.

"*With my best love* to my father,

"Ever your affectionate son,

"WALTER BAGEHOT.

"(Turn over.) I am your affectionate daughter,

"ELIZA BAGEHOT.

"This is the *first* time I have signed my *new* name."

A few short notes to his father were written during the honeymoon. With a great deal of reading of poetry, F. Denison Maurice sermons, Lyra Apostolica — posting from place to place in Devonshire, taking occasionally trains, the honeymoon was passed at Glastonbury, Dawlish, Teignmouth, Chudleigh, Bibbacombe Bay, Plymouth, Ivy Bridge, Bideford, Clovelly, Ilfracombe, Lynmouth.

Here the diary says, "Walter wrote his article on the 'Sinking Fund' for the *Economist*". The same day a letter

brings news from London: "Papa, Mamma, Zoë and Sophie went to Lady Palmerston's where people were mad with excitement about political matters". Again, "Posted from Minehead twenty-seven miles, St. Audrey, Williton, etc., and took the train at Bridgwater. We reached Clevedon at 5.20 and drove home. Went all over The Arches and garden before dinner. House quite ready." The next day was Sunday and they passed the morning in the summer-house, Walter reading Matthew Arnold's poems aloud, and going to Church in the evening.

I was sitting in that same summer-house but a few days ago. It is more than fifty years since I had last seen it. How the ghosts of the things and people of half a century back rallied round it! The beautiful blue Mendip Hills across over the plain on the horizon, alone take precisely the same forms as they did on that Sunday morning passed in the summer-house of Walter Bagehot's and my sister's first home on the 30th May, 1858. Trees have grown tall, creepers planted by my sister have covered in thick masses much of the stone work of the house. As I sat among the ghosts a whimsical feeling as of a dream haunted the whole thing. It was the place—and yet that past to which it belongs did not feel quite real! Certain moments, and what occurred at those moments, and the precise spot at The Arches where they occurred, are lodged in my memory as is lodged the exact scene in the Claverton Woods when we heard the wheels of the carriage that brought Walter Bagehot first among us; I can still find those spots at The Arches, I can still see vividly the scenes as they took place, and yet—how to explain this haunting sense that that past all belongs to dreamland! What happens in the brain that weaves a web across the former self and the self of the present. Is it that these ghosts we conjure up as haunting the old places are in reality there, in spirit with us, shedding over us an influence from their new existence? To them our whole world may have become phantom-like, as are those scenes of the past we are re-enacting in memory.

CHAPTER X.

"THE ARCHES" AND LONDON.

BAGEHOT had chosen his new home—The Arches—mainly on account of the beauty of the views seen from the house and grounds. From the terrace and the windows of the house the dark green of the fir trees makes the foreground of the scene. Beyond and below the hill, flat meadow lands stretch away for miles and miles, till in the far distance a hazy blue range of hills outlines the sky. Pure and soft is the colouring in this Country of the West. As summer clouds float over the plain, islets of purple shadow are interwoven into the sunlit meadows. On stormy days gales from the south-west sweep up from the Channel across the level, widespread stretch of land. Hurrying clouds, darkening the land as they fly over it, create ever-varying effects of light and shade, such as Turner and Constable depict in their records of driven flights of storm. Specially beautiful is this view on moonlight nights when the shining needles of the black firs catch a glistening sparkle, and the broad expanse beyond and the faint distant hills are bathed in silver sheen, the whole washed over by a soft pale sapphire blue. Bagehot, on his first visit to The Arches, foresaw what a source of enjoyment the views over this wide expanse of earth and sky would prove. The Wordsworthian feeling for the beauty of nature which he possessed as a child never died out. He retained it keenly to the end.

When answering Arthur Clough's congratulations on his marriage, Bagehot writes: "I am exceedingly obliged for your kind congratulations. We live on the top of a steep hill here, commanding the entire view of a dead flat. We hope that you and Mrs. Clough will come up the said hill and look down on the said flat when you come into the West. You had better take us on the way to Mr. Froude's."

A week was passed at The Arches, then the first visit together was paid to the old home, Herd's Hill. "Mr. Bagehot's carriage met us," says the diary, "and the bells rang a peal all the evening to welcome us. Strolled on lawn before dinner. Miss Jones (Walter's old governess) came first, then Mr. Edward Bagehot, Mary, Barnes Bagehot and Mr. Watson Bagehot dined at Herd's Hill. Went out on lawn after dinner. Music and cards." "Next day," says Diary, "*Sat up* and Walter stayed at home to receive callers. A great many people came, a circle of fifteen at one time, and had cake and wine and drank our health." In those parts this *sitting up* of brides was then considered almost as essential as the service in church. The next event was a family gathering at The Arches, Mr. and Mrs. Bagehot, my father and the bride and bridegroom—followed by a move to 12 Upper Belgrave Street, where we all rejoiced in having Walter and my sister at home again. Parties, balls, entertainments of all kinds followed. On 2nd July there is the following entry in the diary: "Mr. Greg called for Julia and me. We drove to Wimbledon to dine and sleep. Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Cameron dined there. Mrs. Cameron insisted on taking us to see her sisters at Little Holland House. We found a little party, four sisters—Lady Somers, Mrs. Prinsep and Mrs. Dalrymple being there. Miss Treherne (the notorious Mrs. Weldon) sang. Mr. Henry Taylor and Rossetti were there. Mr. Watts' studio was in the house. Saw his pictures there and in the dining-room." "Two days after," the diary states that "Papa, Walter, Julia and I went to Mrs. Prinsep's garden party at Little Holland House, Miss Treherne sang operatic music with Graziani." This was the first and last visit to Little Holland House which my family paid.[1]

Then comes an evening at Park Lodge with Arthur

[1] Nine years later, introduced by my friend Mrs. Nassau Senior, I visited Watts at what was left of Little Holland House. It was all in tatters, Watts and his studios alone remaining to tell of the past revelries by night and by day of the "Kingdom of Pattledom". You could hardly drive up to the old battered thatched porch, so busy were the roadmakers metalling Melbury Road.

Clough and Mr. James Spedding, dinner parties at Belgrave Street for Walter to meet family friends and interesting acquaintances. Among those mentioned in the diary are Matthew Arnold, Sir Charles Eastlake, and the Dowager Lady Glasgow, Sir Arthur Elton, Sir G. Cornewall and Lady Theresa Lewis, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lowe, Lord Gifford and Lord John Hay, Sir Thomas and Lady Fremantle, and many other literary, artistic, and political people. There were also the veteran Sunday callers, Mr. Hayward, Sir Roderick Murchison, Sir William Somerville (Lord Athlumney). In this fashion was Walter passed into the London world. He enjoyed it, but he hardly took to that world as a world, though that world took to him. To several individuals in it he did. Amongst others he made lasting friendships with Matthew Arnold and Sir George Cornewall Lewis. Perhaps the effect produced on him by the society which had no further interest but that of gregarious sociability, was that of drawing too strong a contrast between the possibilities at the home at Herd's Hill and those of ordinary conditions. Of Mr. Hayward, a professional diner-out, Bagehot said that "he only became decent when the ladies left the room". Bagehot, himself a brilliant talker, was, in talking, as in all else, of choice taste. Mr. Greg, generally present at the dinner parties in Belgrave Street, was also a notably pleasant talker; but as at Claverton, the mainspring of all that was best in our home life was my father.

A joyous event for me happened on 12th July, 1858. Walter and Eliza returned to The Arches and took me with them. I recall those first twelve days spent there as full of sunshine—sunshine within and sunshine without. Though I was not *out* and therefore did not assist at the political functions, the importance of official life invaded the social atmosphere at home. Here at The Arches it was different. It was easy-going, and yet stirringly interesting. Walter went as a rule to Bristol early in the morning. Deliberate-minded people descended the hill through the fir wood by a zigzag carriage drive to the road leading to the railway station. Bagehot, very un-banker-like, would vault and

scramble down the steep short cuts. He would not return till 5 o'clock in the evening, but the hours between seemed all influenced by the same interest which in him was so vivid. Much reading and pleasure in literature had ever been part of the home life, but it had never steeped the atmosphere as it did here. Politics, and the society which official life entails, had since our childhood always taken a foremost place. The stimulant Walter found in reading books and in writing essays was all the stronger because he took it as the *bon-bon* after the solid *pièce de résistance* had been devoured. He maintained that literature should be the play and not the work of life. "You can't write without having something to say—you can't have anything worth saying without catching ideas from contact with your fellow-creatures on lines which have a stirring interest to you and to them." Such was his creed. We at The Arches got the flavour of the *bon-bon*. This love of books is very contagious. A spell was cast over those days, I remember, by my reading to my sister "Ashford Owen's" fascinating story, *A Lost Love*. This book had won the hearts of wise men, such as Tennyson, Sir Henry Taylor, and the Editors of the *National Review*, where it was noticed in an article published in the second issue, October, 1855, under the title "A Novel or Two". Strange was the glamour cast over those days by the enthralment of this short story. It made the real world seem somewhat unreal—the unreal real. Daily events were coloured by it. While Walter was away my sister and I took walks, strolling into the valley to the sea, or over the downs above the headlands. And this glamour of *A Lost Love* wandered with us down to the beach while we sat by the sea, it followed us over the downs where we loitered watching the sun setting behind the Welsh mountains. It was still with us when we sat on the terrace after dinner in the moonlight. In that sweet light air of the uplands the romance of that story invaded everything, weaving itself into the beauty and peaceful feeling of the place.

> Calm and deep peace on this high wold,
> And on these dews that drench the furze,
> And all the silvery gossamers
> That twinkle into green and gold.

Calm and still light on you great plain
That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,
And crowded forms and lessening towers,
To mingle with the bounding main.

And yet what was there in the little book to do all that? The novel reader of the present day would probably say—*Nothing*. Truly only the story of the great miracle told with simple, realistic straight-forwardness, as a Greek poet might recount the miracles worked by his gods. The magic wrought in a dull grey life, of an ordinary English girl, by the invasion into it of the ruby-winged Eros; and again, the tragedy wrought in it when life was suddenly emptied of its joy as the bright wings carried the little god out of it. The enchantment of the story must have been in the telling of it—a right telling that meant that a clear-eyed vision had taught the pen of the writer true and strange things—things that happen every day—and taught it how to recount these things so that the reader knew that they were true and yet strange.[1] Well—the ruby wings had carried the little god into Walter Bagehot's life, and when these things are about in the air it is apt to vibrate with enchantment. Walter's natural high spirits were always brimming over with quaint humour which brought amusing, uncommon elements into conversation. He was very much interested in his new experiences during the past eighteen months since the first day when he came to Claverton. Apart from the happiness they had brought with them, they were new fields wherein to start the growth of fresh ideas. Every one who belonged to that new life had an interest for him. Whether it was playing billiards, reading aloud, or merely talking—he made himself always excellent company. After finishing an article "Proofs of Religion," never published, he wrote occasionally for the

[1] The critic of the *National Review* could not make up his mind whether "Ashford Owen" was a man or a woman, but ended his criticism by "This is not our last parting, we trust, from 'Ashford Owen,'" but alas! it was. Years after those first days of sunshine at The Arches I met the writer. It *was* a woman. I asked her why she had never written another story. "But I did, it was *so* bad—I never speak of it. It was a *crime!*" To have created one single gem in literature of the quality of *A Lost Love* would condone for many crimes.

Economist but nothing else till the autumn. During that summer when at home he rested and enjoyed his happiness.

Soon a change came over the spirit of the dream—a change from "Ashford Owen" to Jane Austen. Mrs. Bagehot was clamouring for Walter and my sister to return to Herd's Hill, and she invited me also. It was on the 23rd of July, 1858, that we three arrived at the place which has meant home to me more than any other place in the world for many years past.

It had been the habit of our sisterhood to read Jane Austen's books periodically aloud to each other, especially *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*, and the characters in them had become our intimate acquaintances. The link which bound a firm tie of friendship between Mr. Hutton and ourselves from the first visit he paid us, was created by his solemnly declaiming the opening sentence of Darcy's famous proposal in *Pride and Prejudice*—"Long have I struggled!" On arriving at Herd's Hill it was as if one had stepped back into the world of a hundred years ago, a world of Jane Austen's novels. A delightful world it was. No place ever possessed a stronger character of its own. It seemed set fixed in its own little frame, so fixed that there was little need of formality. Everyone and everything moved easily within its acknowledged traditions. Everyone was allowed freely to possess his or her individuality, because beyond certain limits it was supposed to be impossible for anyone to pass.

"Mrs. Bagehot met us at the station," says the diary, "and drove us home in the new carriage." I fell in love with her at first sight. The vivacity, charm and spontaneity in everything she did and said, the captivating tone of her voice, soft yet vibrating, was irresistible. The old world atmosphere of the place made a quaint setting to her and Walter's racy talk. When these two were together the fine humour in each was at its best, for, as Bagehot would say, no one ever understood his jokes so well as did his mother. We had been told that Mrs. Bagehot was at times insane, but it was difficult to realise it when with her. You felt so intimately near her, even when she herself spoke of her malady, which she did to myself and

my sister, that the home tragedy came to us more as a legend than as an actual fact. To those who have the treatment of this mysterious calamity, the effect produced on his mother by Bagehot's behaviour towards her might be an interesting study. His attitude prevented her feeling any loneliness or isolation, which is so often felt by those of unsound mind, and which doubtless increases the malady. In his attitude towards her he never let go for an instant the feeling of the natural tie which existed between them—that of the mother and child ; he never let her wander out alone into the desert of her aberrations without making every effort to understand them and to discuss them with her. However difficult it might be to catch hold of any ray of reason, he would rarely give up an endeavour to find some common ground to meet on. This merciful tenderness is evinced in many letters he wrote to her when they were apart. They had so much in common that, when well, however great was her affection for Mr. Bagehot, she felt her son's mind the closer companion to her own. An exciting element in the atmosphere of this ostensibly quiet West Country home, was doubtless produced through the insanity which was so closely allied to genius in Mrs. Bagehot, and the intimate union between her mind and Bagehot's in whom the genius was unalloyed, united moreover to an extraordinarily sound judgment and sane character. Mr. Bagehot was kind and hospitable, quiet, dignified and reserved. He talked interestingly on serious topics but was otherwise generally silent.

On the first morning of our visit, after Mr. Bagehot and Walter had left the breakfast table, Mrs. Bagehot, as was her custom, began reading the Psalms while the butler cleared away the breakfast, explaining to us that by this means she insured his getting some Bible reading every day. When Sunday came the usual events that had always taken place at Herd's Hill were repeated. Mr. Bagehot conducted a Unitarian service in the drawing-room which Walter and my sister attended. Mrs. Bagehot and I drove to the beautiful old church on the hill. The quaint little town, the impressive church, the family gathering on the lawn of Hill House after

the service where Mrs. Stuckey received us as a kind of Matriarch, were all very new experiences and full of interest. Mrs. Stuckey continued the traditions of her husband, the notable Vincent Stuckey, who received in patriarchal style under the big elm tree and welcomed all comers to Hill House. In the afternoon all from Herd's Hill except Mr. Bagehot attended the service at Huish Episcopi Church of the beautiful tower, rising barely a quarter of a mile beyond the tower of Langport Church. The service was succeeded by a visit to the Kennels to view Walter's pack of harriers, a ramble over the grounds of Hill House, and a great deal of conversation with various members of the family. As in Miss Austen's stories the conversation was very animated, but the subject of conversation did not always appear quite to justify the amount of animation. But also, as in the case in Miss Austen's books, the fact that the individuality of the speaker was invariably expressed in the language used, gave an interest to any subject. Bagehot made the talk rise to a higher level of humour when he was to the fore, but cheeriness and vivacity were ever present, all the company seeming to be very much interested in everyone else and their concerns. The members of this little social circle seemed to have an extraordinary power of talking for hours together without having any special topic to discuss. There were days when visitors, relations, or old friends from the neighbourhood would arrive at Herd's Hill at noon, and talk till, and through luncheon—talk till five o'clock tea—talk till dinner and through dinner. There was a pause after dinner for tea, cards and music; then the tray would appear, wine, sandwiches and cake—then family prayers, then a little more talk, and the departure of the guests would not take place long before midnight. What the talk was about it is impossible to recall, but the miracle remains, that, after nearly twelve hours of talking, the company —guests and hosts—did not become either dull, weary or sleepy. Mrs. Bagehot was the worker of the miracle—and she was seventy-two years old on the Friday of that week when I first stayed at Herd's Hill.

Such were the impressions left after a first visit to Walter

Bagehot's home, impressions which were like those always left by himself—unlike any others. We left after a short visit in order that Bagehot and my sister should welcome our whole family who arrived from London. Riding, music, billiard playing and hilarity went on all through August, after which the bride and bridegroom were allowed to retire into private life, having fulfilled all the duties and functions required of them. On 5th September my sister records in her diary that they dined alone for the first time since the 18th of June.

The intercourse between Clevedon Court and The Arches was frequent. Sir Arthur and Lady Elton were not only themselves cultured and pleasant neighbours, but their guests were also such as Bagehot enjoyed meeting. Mr. Kinglake, Mr. Freeman, Mr. Venables and others of like kind visited Clevedon Court during that autumn. Members of the Bagehot family and old friends, Mr. Greg and Mr. and Mrs. Hutton were among the visitors at The Arches in August. The inexhaustible delights of *Pride and Prejudice* were for the hundredth time again enjoyed during their stay, Mr. Hutton reading it aloud to us, in, I remember, an emphatic manner which accentuated every humorous point. The whole party moved on from The Arches to Claverton, Mr. Hutton and Bagehot appearing there for the first time with their wives. Later when the Yeomanry were out at Bath a ball was given at Claverton and the Bagehots assisted at that and also at several house parties. It was also while at Claverton in September that Bagehot began writing his article on Dickens for the October number of the *National Review*.

1859 was a year marked by stirring political events. In the early days of the Session, contrary to the traditions of Tory policy, the Derby administration brought forward a Reform Bill which was frustrated by Lord John Russell's famous "Resolution". On all hands it was admitted that the Government could not proceed with the Bill in the form in which it had been presented. Lord Derby then decided to go to the country. The Conservatives were returned with a majority but with an uncertain future. Lord John Russell hurried forward with a programme of reform which Lord Palmerston

instantly disavowed. Everything seemed to be at sixes and sevens. Mr. Gladstone made a striking speech which seemed to imply that he belonged to neither party, Liberals nor Conservatives. When, however, on the overthrow of the Government in June, Lord Palmerston was given the task of forming a new ministry, Lord John Russell consented to act under him as foreign minister and Mr. Gladstone accepted the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Differences and jealousies for the time subsided in order that a Reform Bill should be passed by the Liberal Party. At the general election my father was returned for Devonport at the head of the poll, and when the Whig ministry was formed Lord Palmerston offered him the Presidency of the Board of Works or the Vice-Presidency of the Board of Trade. He accepted the latter, to which was then attached the duties of Paymaster of the Forces and an entrance into the Privy Council.

In the January number of the *National Review* had appeared an article by Walter Bagehot on "Parliamentary Reform". The subject was in everyone's mind and the manner in which it was treated in this study was considered exceptionally able. So much praise was given it that in February Bagehot published it in pamphlet form, adding a note suggested by the events of the previous weeks. The first paragraph of this note shows the line which Bagehot took:

"We shall not," he writes, "be expected to discuss in a party spirit the subject of Parliamentary Reform. It has never been objected to the *National Review* that it is a party organ; even periodicals which have long been such, scarcely now discuss that subject in a party spirit. Both Whigs and Conservatives are pledged to do something, and neither as a party have agreed what they would do. We would attempt to give an impartial criticism of the electoral system which now exists, and some indication of the mode in which we think that its defects should be amended."

Referring to this impartial criticism, Mr. Robert Lowe[1] wrote:—

[1] Mr. Robert Lowe was then Vice-President of the Council of Education. From 1868 to 1873 Chancellor of the Exchequer. On retiring from the House of Commons he was created Lord Sherbrooke.

10*th March*, 1859.

"My dear Mr. Bagehot,

"Pray accept my best thanks for your excellent article on Reform, which is beyond compare the best I have seen on the subject, and is indeed written with the insight of a statesman and the moderation of a philosopher. At the same time I fear that the passion for equality (the shallowest of all delusions) is so fixed that any attempt to create inequalities between classes in different places would fail, and that a low franchise in some places would only serve as a lever for obtaining it in all. We could not carry it, and if we could we could not maintain the exception. I also think that we could not lot existing boroughs together, because a cry would be raised in favour of larger towns which remained unenfranchised. The truth is the impossibility of carrying out your view is on a sample of that which is coming upon us. Your principles are true but too refined for popular apprehension, and in this, as in so many other cases, we are forced to sacrifice what we see to be right to the incompetency of the tribunal which would decide upon it.

"This does not diminish your merit and I do not doubt that your view will bear fruit in some way or other though not in the direction you propose.

"Remember me very kindly to Mrs. Bagehot, and,

"Believe me,

"Very truly yours,

"Robert Lowe."

Mr. G. Arbuthnot[1] wrote from the Treasury respecting the pamphlet *Parliamentary Reform*, "Many thanks for your pamphlet which is so sensible that it will please no one".

Thackeray wrote to Chapman & Hall, who published it: "I hear Mr. Bagehot has written a wonderfully clever pamphlet—Please send me a copy."

This pamphlet on Parliamentary reform was virtually the work which landed Walter Bagehot into the inner circle of political life. My father writes:—

[1] Auditor of the Civil List, and considered the most able clerk of the Treasury of his time.

"12 UPPER BELGRAVE ST.
"*March*, 1859.

"MY DEAR BAGEHOT,

"Everyone speaks in the highest terms of your Reform Pamphlet. Gladstone is delighted with it, and in mentioning it last night, not at the moment knowing we were connected, spoke in great praise of your former book, *Estimates*. Let me have a list of those to whom the Pamphlet was sent. Was one sent to Lord Grey? We are getting into some confusion in the political world about the Reform Bill. The great objection among the Radicals is the non-redivision of the Borough franchise, and among thoughtful politicians the identity of franchise in town and country, on the grounds I put very shortly in a paragraph at the end of Hutton's article this week. But as things stand these two objections come nearly to the same thing—and Lord John's Resolution embraces both classes of objectors. If the matter were to be voted on now the Government would be beaten.

"The House is just as bad a one as can be, and I see no good to be done with it. It is rife with jealousy. Gladstone has not pronounced that I have heard of, although he told me last night that he did not like the Bill, and especially the principle of identity of Franchise. He said it was a very different Bill from what he expected. . . ."

When Bagehot and my sister were staying with us in March my father invited those who had expressed special admiration for the pamphlet to meet them at dinner. These included Lord Grey, Lord Granville, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Robert Lowe, Mr. Cardwell, Mr. Edward Bouverie, Sir George Cornewall Lewis, Sir Richard Bethel,[1] and Thackeray.

Walter wrote from Herd's Hill to my sister who was with us in London: "I am very glad the party is said to be still coming off. It will really be a very fine collection of public animals. As to reform it will be curious, as Mr. Gladstone is going to vote for the ministry, and Lord Grey has recommended Lord Elcho to vote for them; and all the rest of the Parliamentary party are decidedly for Lord John's Resolution. I take it is a

[1] Afterwards created Lord Westbury as Lord Chancellor.

new idea to have a dinner party of both sides on a division night —particularly a division on a fundamental question 'affecting the constitution of our country' as one says in articles, and I hope the novelty will prosper."

The "novelty" proved a success, and several political dinners and parties at the Gladstones and others followed, but early in April the Bagehots were back at The Arches, he, in his spare moments, reading aloud to my sister the Psalms, *Paradise Lost*, Matthew Arnold, Shelley, and in no wise regretting the whirl of London. He accepted the position of a literary lion in the world of political magnates with a sense of amusement rather than with any other, I think. He was much interested in all the events connected with his home life. He was fond of driving, so my sister and he decided on having a phaeton and a pair of ponies. "Uncle Reynolds," my father and Walter were all on the look-out for a suitable pair. On 22nd July, 1859, Walter writes to my sister: "I have done nothing in ponies yet and do not even know what my uncle has done. But I will devote my whole mind to it to-morrow. I will also be painted." Mrs. Bagehot was desirous of having portraits painted in miniature of Walter and my sister.

In the April of 1859 Bagehot again began writing for the *Saturday Review*, to which he had not contributed any articles since 1856. He reviewed *Lost and Won* by Georgiana M. Craik, *The Dean, or the Popular Preacher*, *Rogers' Recollections*, and *The Semi-Detached House*, by Miss Eden, edited by Lady Theresa Lewis. This last was a book entirely to Bagehot's taste. Its sparkling dialogue and still more its cheerful and habitual good sense appealed to him greatly. No virtue appealed to Bagehot more than did *good sense*. Of Lord Stanhope,[1] he admiringly wrote that he had "the cautious scepticism of true common sense," and shrank "from wonderful novelties". This was essentially Walter Bagehot's own attitude of mind.

For the July number of the *National Review*, 1859, Bagehot wrote the essay on John Milton, which commences with an amusing disquisition on the different methods of

[1] See "William Pitt," *National Review*, 1861.

treating the art of biography. Notwithstanding Bagehot's profound appreciation of Milton's genius, his admiration did not inspire him to treat Milton with solemnity and unalloyed reverence. Delightful spurts of humour abound throughout the essay, especially where he refers to political bias shown in celestial controversies. "I am grinding on at Milton," he writes to my sister from Herd's Hill, "and have done ever so much; but it is very bad and will be very long. We have a family party to-day which will spoil the evening, to my intense annoyance, but one ought to be able to endure one's relations after knowing them so long; but they are 'co-inhabiting mischief' here, one sees so much of them."

Since the first days of acquaintance with Bagehot my father had enjoyed his society. Bagehot also had felt that he derived great advantage from talking out subjects with my father. Each grew to admire and like the other cordially, and an affectionate intimacy sprung up between them. Bagehot possessed to a rare degree those qualities which inspire confidence. Letters written in 1859 prove that my father at that time consulted him with reference to the most private family concerns. This close connection with my father was one of the fortunate events in Bagehot's life. His feeling for his own father in boyhood and youth was little short of adoration, and he retained great filial admiration and affection for him to the end; but, as seen in his letter to Mr. Hutton, written when the latter was in Barbadoes, he had felt impatient of the teasing restrictions of the minutiæ while learning business with him. He desired more action, and that action on more extended lines. My father had also always possessed the impulse to busy himself not only with the affairs of men, but with the great, the important affairs of men. While in no wise devoid of imagination he had nevertheless an uncommon amount of the intuitive good sense which Bagehot admired so greatly. He had a singularly sane, well-balanced mind, and he treated all subjects with fairness, invariably showing generosity towards the opinions held by others. These qualities, united with a rare gift of exposition, won for him great esteem from all classes. But in common with Bagehot he possessed a

force behind these qualities, "the excitement of origination,"[1] and a buoyant hopefulness arising from a sense of power. When very young Bagehot also possessed this buoyancy, but circumstances later had suppressed it. Contact with my father seemed in a measure to revive the youthful spring. He wrote to his friend Killigrew Wait: "In one's infancy one woke up with a new *Weltansicht* every morning; my friends say I am too sceptical, but I say that I am only lazy in believing, as I am in everything else. Indeed it seems to me that I do that better than I do most other things."

My father had never known such periods of apathy nor could he ever have been called sceptical. He was not in the habit of seriously considering questions which did not appeal to him as important, but those which he considered important he would work through in his mind exhaustively until he found a principle on which to form a definite opinion in respect to them, and this opinion he would hold firmly. Though personally extremely modest and reserved, he attacked all public work with an almost exultant confidence and courage, a confidence and courage arising, I imagine, greatly from his power of detaching entirely any personal considerations or inclinations from his duties as an official. As a public servant he rose on to a platform on which he ceased to be anything but a servant to the public. This attitude Bagehot was the first to appreciate. In 1859 my father was fifty-four and Bagehot thirty-three years of age. My father had been in Parliament twelve years, having entered the House of Commons as member for Westbury at the General Election in July, 1847. Bagehot writes in his memoir of my father: "He showed considerable abilities in electioneering, and a close observer once said of him, 'Mr. Wilson may or may not be the best Political Economist in England, but depend upon it he is the only Political Economist who would ever come in for the borough of Westbury'". There was an autumn session that year. My father soon gained the ear of the House, his speeches on the Navigation Laws, Sugar Duties, and kindred subjects being

[1] See Essay on Mr. Gladstone.

much approved by both sides of the House. In a published letter to his sister, Disraeli writes at that time referring to a debate on Free Trade, "Wilson very good". About Easter, 1848, Lord John Russell, then Prime Minister, offered my father office as Secretary to the Indian Board of Control. On his accepting the post, Cobden wrote to Mr. Greg: "Wilson has committed political suicide". Though my father had been a member of the Council of the Anti-Corn Law League, and spoke at its meetings at Drury Lane with Cobden, Bright, O'Connell, Milner Gibson, and other free-traders, that kind of agitation was not congenial to him. He would say that he should be sorry to see other political questions worked in that way. His mind was of the orthodox Whig type. He called himself a Conservative Liberal. Bagehot's views and feelings accorded well with those of my father. Common to both was a dignity which made any extravagance in the expression of feeling distasteful.

Contact with the active political world through this congenial intimacy with my father gave a fresh impetus to Bagehot's life. He had reached a landing place where—to quote his own words respecting William Pitt—he had "received the inestimable permission to be himself". Bagehot had begun life playing the rôle of a remarkably clever boy, adored and admired by his parents; he had surpassed all his fellow-students at the Bristol College, and found himself in a class by himself; he had been looked on as a sort of demi-god by his fellow-students at University College, London; he had studied law, and hated it—was called to the Bar, and left it. He then found himself learning business in the rural West Country and failing to give satisfaction in its very rudiments. His real powers crept out at intervals in articles published in the *Prospective Review* which his parents read because they were his; probably no one else in or near Langport even glanced at them. He hunted over the country in good comradeship with country gentlemen who had but the vaguest idea that he had ever written anything—(he *had* written "Hartley Coleridge," "Bishop Butler," and "Shakespeare—the Man"). A few old friends, Mr. Hutton,

Mr. Roscoe, Mr. Osler kept up from afar the tradition in his own mind that he had certain gifts; and somewhat later, Matthew Arnold, not knowing who he was, had read him, and hailed him from afar as a fellow-creature. But he passed his everyday life ostensibly as one belonging to a very ordinary species, who enjoyed no intellectual exaltation among his fellows—no cheers from the public. In his essay on William Pitt[1] he describes what the views of his past and present must have been in those years when he was hidden away learning business at Langport.

"Most boys are conceited; most boys have a wonderful belief in their own power. At sixteen, said Mr. Disraeli, every one believes he is the most peculiar man who ever lived. And there is certainly no difficulty in imagining Mr. Disraeli thinking so. The difficulty is, not to entertain this proud belief, but to keep it; not to have these lofty visions, but to hold them. Manhood comes, and with it come the plain facts of the world. There is no illusion in them; they have a distinct teaching. The world, they say definitely, does not believe in you. You fancy you have a call to a great career, but no one else even imagines that you fancy it. You do not dare to say it out aloud. Before the fear of ridicule and the touch of reality, the illusions pass away, and with them goes all intellectual courage. We have no longer the hardihood, we have scarcely the wish to form our own creed, to think our own thoughts, to act upon our own belief; we try to be sensible, and we end in being ordinary; we fear to be eccentric, and we end in being commonplace."

The *Saturday Review* (*Saturday Reviler* as it was then called) did its work with Bagehot for a time, and accentuated the "fear of ridicule". But happiness came into his life, and with it some of the old spring and heartiness of high spirits; and he looks back on his foe with a just estimate of how little the world's real progress is affected by this cultured reviling.

"The *Saturday Review* is remarkable as an attempt on the part of 'university men' to speak on political topics and social difficulties of the time. And what do they teach us?

[1] See *National Review*, July, 1861.

It is something like this: 'So-and-so has written a tolerable book, and he would call attention to the industry which produces tolerable books. So-and-so has devoted himself to a great subject, and we would observe that the interest now taken in great subjects is very commendable. Such-and-such a lady has delicate feelings, which are desirable in a lady, though we know that they are contrary to the facts of the world. All common persons are doing as well as they can, but it does not come to much after all. All statesmen are doing as ill as they can, and let us be thankful that *that* does not come to much either.' We may search and search this repository of the results of 'university teaching' for a single truth which it has established, for a single high cause which it has advanced, for a single deep thought which is to sink into the minds of its readers. We have, indeed, a nearly perfect embodiment of the corrective scepticism of a sleepy intellect. 'A.B. says he has done something, but he has not done it; C.D. has made a parade of demonstrating this or that proposition, but he has not proved his case; there is one mistake in page 5, and another in page 113; a great history has been written of this or that century, but the best authorities as to that period have not been consulted, which, however, is not very remarkable, as there is nothing in them.'"[1]

As nothing is more depressing than living with a mind not set on the square—so to speak—one which never seizes things as they exactly are, or imagines them as they truly could be, so there is nothing more exhilarating than intimate contact with a mind that in great and small matters alike always sums up right. Such was my father's. His sensibilities had never been nipped by any such sceptical influence as that of the *Saturday Review;* he had never suffered from the fear of ridicule; he had never enjoyed the distorting luxury of being in the position of an only child, and the centre of home adoration. Nothing great had been expected of him. He was one of fifteen brothers and sisters, and had had with them

[1] Essay on Mr. Gladstone, *National Review*, July, 1860.

to share a fifteenth part of very sound and wise training and education, and a discreet affection appropriate to the Quaker temperament. In working his way through life his spirit had never been maimed at any time by the iron entering into the soul. His own qualities had had free play, and through them chiefly he had secured a distinguished position in the political world. To sum up—it was a happy turn of fortune for Bagehot to have made a close friendship with a nature which restored to him something of the confidence and hopefulness of youth. About my father the breath of success seemed to be in the very air, and it was precisely this exhilarating quality which stimulated Bagehot, and allowed him "the inestimable permission to be himself".

Further he enjoyed our family life. He would say that both Claverton and Upper Belgrave Street were good places because "both mind and body were so well attended to". My father's strong family affections appealed to Bagehot. From our early childhood my father would share with us all his own interest in public questions. All that was passing in the world of politics we, as children, knew at first hand from him. He would take us long walks on Sunday afternoons, and tell us all that was happening inside and outside the House of Commons. No less had Bagehot's father from his childhood discussed every important public question with him. By reason of all this Bagehot felt he fitted well into his new family, and assuredly he was greatly welcomed by every member of it.

During a time I spent at The Arches in May, 1859, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Clough paid a visit to the Bagehots. Mr. Clough was very silent. Crabb Robinson described him as "that admirable and accomplished man—you know whom I mean—the one who never says anything". I do not know how he did it, but though so silent, Arthur Clough inspired Bagehot to talk his best. He said few words, but those few made Bagehot eloquent. Everything about Mr. Clough, I remember as being *rounded*, the shape of his head, his eyes, his intonation—all was rounded, nothing angular.

On returning to London, Bagehot made the acquaintance of

Charles Villiers, Sir James Lacaita, M. de Rémusat and many other well-known men. My mother gave a ball, and Walter took me to the opera, a great concession on his part, the stage in any form being distasteful to him. In those days he looked upon actors and actresses as pitiable people who made fools of themselves. He had never, like Matthew Arnold, come under the influence of a really great artist like Rachel. If he had, he might have thought differently of the whole tribe. He invited our family to a fish dinner at Greenwich to meet some of his old friends. I remember the evening as very delightful. Mr. Justice Quain was especially vivacious on the occasion. Attached to every event of that year is a special and melancholy interest. It was the last summer we passed all together.

At this moment in July, when stirring events were imminent in our family life, Walter Bagehot heard of the death of his friend William Roscoe. For some weeks he had been ailing. Subsequently, while being nursed at Mr. Osler's house at Richmond, typhoid fever declared itself, and he succumbed on July the 30th. Mr. Hutton and Walter Bagehot equally felt his death as a great personal sorrow. Mr. Hutton wrote in the Memoir which prefaces Mr. Roscoe's collected works: "I never knew any other man whose death could have made so deep a rent in the hearts and lives of other men outside the circle of his own family. . . . There were several, I believe, who would have been really more elated by his success than by their own; who, had he gained a poet's fame, would have felt their own life brighter, and who have lost in him one of the main vital springs of their own happiness." Bagehot wrote in a letter which Mr. Hutton affixed to the Memoir: "I have said that I do not think he was very exactly adapted to a barrister's occupation, and he certainly had no love of an advocate's life. . . . But in one respect he always seemed to me to resemble the greatest of English advocates, Erskine. There was, we are told, a sort of casual perfection about the common manner of the latter; Mr. Wyndham said that all his motions were 'like those of a blood-horse'; there was an unconscious finish about them,

which fascinated juries and attracted every one about him. For me, at least, Roscoe had just that fascination." Bagehot ends the letter with: "All this will seem to you, as it does to me, very superficial; and I could have wished to go into the deeper parts of the character I have been speaking of . . . I hoped to have said something of his rare critical powers; of the partially developed gift of poetry which was in him; of his delicate but firm, pure but sensitive moral nature; of his peculiarly *un*complex religion; but I have not been able to say what I want. There was a sort of refined simplicity about him which made all he did, said or believed, characteristic of him, but which I cannot describe. I feel I could not say what I wish, and do not like to run any risk of leaving an impression which would be false. And this feeling of the peculiar circumstances comes upon me more and more. How strange it is that you should be writing, and I should be contributing to his life! All the strange things that have ever happened to me do not at this moment seem as strange to me as that. Not so many years ago, he seemed to have much more life than any of us. 'But what is before us we know not; and we know not what shall succeed.'"

A prophetic note rings in those last words. Mr. Hutton, whose health caused great anxiety to Bagehot and Roscoe during many years, survived Walter Bagehot twenty years, and Roscoe thirty-seven years.

Besides the Reform Bill, two other topics were arousing great interest in the public mind during the spring and summer in 1859—the Mutiny Bill and the war between France and Italy against Austria. In April Lord Stanley had announced the necessity of raising £7,000,000 in the London market to meet the strain on the Indian finances caused by the Mutiny. Before the Bill had time to pass through the Parliamentary forms, it was asserted by the best authorities that the projected loan must be increased to £12,000,000. It was beginning to be gravely considered whether the resources of India itself should not be made to meet future liabilities, and the idea that a political financier should be sent out from England to cope with the difficulty was taking a definite form. My father's

first post in Lord John Russell's Government having been Secretary of the Indian Board of Control, he knew much about India and entered with keen interest into the discussion. On 28th June is found the following entry in the Diary: "Papa arrived from Devonport at 3.30, the express having stopped for him at Yatton. We talked of India all the evening." On the 22nd of July, Bagehot wrote to my sister from London: "Your father gives a very amusing account of the interior of the Board of Trade, but he thinks more of India than of anything else." On 27th July, Sir Charles Wood, then Secretary of State for India, offered to create for my father the post of Financial Member of the Supreme Council in India, and on 1st August my father accepted it. On 1st August also Sir Charles Wood produced his Indian Budget, in which there was no attempt to conceal the difficulties of his case. The *Times* thereupon announced my father's appointment.

"THE INDIAN FINANCE MINISTER AND CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

"We have authority for stating that the Right Hon. James Wilson has consented to go to India as a Member of Council and also as Chancellor of the Indian Exchequer. Mr. Wilson's position towards the Governor-General and the Cabinet in the latter capacity will be similar to that which the Chancellor of the Exchequer bears at home to the Government and the Cabinet. The task which the new Member of Council has before him is certainly not a very hopeful one, but Mr. Wilson will carry with him to India habits of business and a financial ability hitherto but too rarely exhibited on the banks of the Hooghly, and if he succeeds in making India solvent, and in proving that she can pay her way, he will have rendered a public service which cannot be too highly appreciated. One element of success he will certainly carry with him in the full confidence and support of the Home Government; and having secured that, we trust that the sacrifice he is about to make will meet with its reward in the return of financial prosperity to our Indian dominions."

Bagehot keenly realised the great sacrifices my father was

making in taking this step, but I do not believe when he accepted the office they even crossed my father's mind. Bagehot saw clearly that with another step forward my father would occupy a place in the Cabinet. He had great weight in the House of Commons. His character, his exceptional power of speaking and of elucidating clearly the points of a difficult question, and his untiring energy and power of work, had secured for him a distinctly unique position in the political world. Bagehot wrote in his Memoir of my father: "He was able to do an important work better than any one else could do it, and, in English public life, real work rightly done at the right season scarcely ever fails to meet with a real reward". And again of his power of converting those who held contrary opinions to his own by the "vigorous simplicity of his arguments," Bagehot writes: "It penetrated where it could not be expected to penetrate. The Duke of Wellington was, perhaps, more likely to be prejudiced against a theoretical Political Economist than any eminent man of his day; he belonged to the 'pre-scientific period,' he had much of the impatient practicality incident to military insight; he was not likely to be very partial to the 'doctrines of Mr. Huskisson'; nevertheless the Duke early pointed out Mr. Wilson's writings to Lord Brougham as possessing especial practical value; and when the Duke at a much later period was disposed to object to the repeal of the Navigation Laws, Mr. Wilson had a special interview to convince him of its expediency."[1]

My father had formed several very intimate personal

[1] The Duke and my father would at times meet in the Hamilton Gardens. I recollect very clearly one little incident, happening when my sisters and I were small children, which was very characteristic of the Duke. We were living in Hertford Street and passed most of our play-time in the Hamilton Gardens. One summer evening the Duke and my father were walking together up and down the gravel paths, the Duke leaning on the arm of his beautiful daughter-in-law. We were trying with more ambition than knowledge to fly kites. The Duke saw we were doing it all wrong. Breaking away from Lady Druro and my father he walked briskly across the lawn and showed us the proper way in which to fly kites, and watched the result with a keen interest. Under his guidance this was entirely successful, and the kites flew up in the air as high as Apsley House.

friendships with the politicians of the day. There exists a large packet of letters from Sir George Cornewall Lewis to my father which proves how intimate they were. My father had filled the post of Secretary of the Treasury in a manner which had changed for good the whole working of the office. Naturally very few who knew my father at the Treasury are now alive. I asked one of the few, Lord Welby, to write down any recollections he might have of him, and he has most kindly sent me the following letter:—

"11 STRATTON STREET,
"12*th January*, 1913.

"DEAR MRS. BARRINGTON,

"I entered the Treasury as a junior clerk in the summer of 1856. Your father was then Financial Secretary of the Treasury, having been appointed to that post at the end of 1852, when Lord Aberdeen formed the Coalition Government. Mr. Wilson remained Financial Secretary under Lord Palmerston, and he went out with him in 1858. He had therefore an unusually long tenure of that post, I think longer than any one since the Reform Bill. In the fifties the post of Financial Secretary to the Treasury was, if not the first, at least as good as any out of the Cabinet. At that time the functions of Government were very restricted, and the middle-class *régime*, then supreme, had no liking for a widening of Government interference. The Administrative Departments, then the Home Office, the Board of Trade, the Poor Laws Board, were not in prominence. On the other hand, the country was only beginning its great recovery from the calamities and the sufferings which the war had inflicted on the people. The Public was really interested in Finance. Sir Robert Peel had been the great Economical Minister of the Treasury, and the Treasury power of controlling expenditure was very great. The Treasury itself was divided into two branches, (1) Financial, (2) Control. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was the Executive head of the Treasury, and the Financial Secretary of the Treasury was his lieutenant. Chancellors were chiefly interested in the finance side, and the Financial Secretary of the Treasury was contented with the control of expenditure.

This control was summed up in the formula, 'Treasury consent is necessary to every measure increasing or tending to increase the public expenditure'. The powers actually exercised by the Financial Secretary were very large. He was in the main judge as to questions of control which should be reserved for the Chancellor. Your father wielded these powers with great freedom and effect for between five and six years. A rapid and indefatigable worker, he was the chief organiser of the public service in that time. These were days before shorthand or typewriting, and I remember with wonder the extent and amount of the minutes and memoranda which he wrote with his own hand. I have said that I entered the Treasury as a junior in 1856. I had, therefore, no personal knowledge of Mr. Wilson at that time, but for years and years in organisation of the service, the lines which he had laid down were so to speak a bulwark of fortification, and what he called the 'forma paper' of a subject, that is its file, commonly commenced with a remark in his rapid but somewhat difficult-to-follow hand. He was a keen practical man of business, and I remember a reform of the Treasury Department which he carried out, turning a sleepy office of eighteenth century type, into what was, for that time, an active office with greater opportunity for the clerks to learn their work and fit themselves for responsibility. Your father served, during their Ministry, under Mr. Gladstone till 1855, and then under Sir George Cornewall Lewis. The story was that when he was pressing the Treasury reform on Sir G. Cornewall Lewis (the Chancellor of the Exchequer), who was not an *active* administrator, the latter said, 'You see, Wilson, you are an animal, I am only a vegetable'.

"Your father was not only an active and very capable financial administrator, but he took great interest, as you know, in Currency questions, taking the side opposed to Peel, Overstone and Sir Charles Wood.

"Looking back from the beginning of the twentieth century, I have always considered your father the most vigorous and most efficient Financial Secretary of the Treasury we have had. Perhaps there might be question between him and

Huskisson, though I feel convinced that as *administrator* he was the best.

"Yours very truly,
"WELBY."

In his memoir of my father Bagehot writes: "On two occasions during the tenure of office at the Treasury, Mr. Wilson was offered a different post. In the autumn of 1856 he was offered the Chairmanship of Inland Revenue, a permanent office of considerable value then vacant, which he declined because he did not consider the income necessary to him, and because (what some people would think odd) it did not afford sufficient occupation. It was a 'good pillow,' he said, 'but he did not wish to lie down'. The second office offered him was the Vice-Presidency of the Board of Trade in 1855. . . . He had, however, secured so firm a position in official circles by his real efficiency, that the dispensers of patronage were, as he believed, likely to give him whatever he desired as soon as the exigencies of party enabled them to do so."

Doubtless in going to India my father left much that was of sterling worth to him; a life of earnest activity in the House of Commons, a family life in England which was a delight to him, relations for whom he always retained a tenacious affection, old and new friends, and companionship with Bagehot and with three of his daughters. The severing from all this my father certainly felt, but there was important work to be done and he felt capable of doing it. That clenched the matter; there was no hesitation.

Before leaving England my father travelled to his birthplace, visited all his relations and many friends, and places where he could obtain information on points useful to him in the work before him. He was entertained at banquets and receptions given in his honour at Manchester and elsewhere. He returned to Claverton for a few days' rest before starting.[1]

[1] Some members of the family of Kilvert, well known in Bath, lived at Claverton in 1859. In 1860 Mrs. Kilvert sent our family the following entry from her Diary. "'Mr. A. called on us on his way to Mr. Duck-

The Government recognised that my father was making a sacrifice in going to India. It was intimated to him that on returning after five years, he would not have to seek for a seat in the House of Commons, as one would be provided for him in the Upper Chamber. The *Economist* my father left in Bagehot's hands, Mr. Hutton still remaining the editor. My sister Julia and myself (I being then considered too young to go to India) he entrusted to the Bagehots' care. Two days after my father accepted the post created for him in the Supreme Council, one of my sisters was married at Claverton to William Stirling Halsey, of the Indian Civil Service, whom my father later appointed as one of his private secretaries.

worth's seat, Orchardleigh. We had much interesting talk on the past, present and future state of India. He said he had had a very long night's conference with our kind friend and neighbour, the Rt. Hon. James Wilson, when he had a public reception given him at Manchester this month, just previous to his embarkation for Dublin, whence he was so good as to write to me a friendly note in acknowledgment for my brief "sketch" of our mutual friend Mrs. Fry, which had followed him to the Castle of Dublin. Mr. A. said of Mr. Wilson, "he was one of the great-minded men of the day". Mr. Kilvert had ever admired his kind, simple, self-possessed manners when our neighbour at Claverton Manor. A very few days, *perhaps hours*, before he took his final leave of that beautiful home, he walked down Claverton Hill and entered the vestibule steps. I heard the voice of a stranger talking to our servant. Mr. Kilvert, knowing his voice, instantly came forward and led him into the bow room. He cast his eye on the walls with evident emotion, and there was the best engravings of his early and beloved friends, Mrs. Fry, Joseph John Gurney and Sir Robert H. Inglis. Some deep chord was touched by these remembrances, rendered unspeakably dear by the wrench he was enduring in quitting his own native land. He told me the following circumstances: "When I was at school Mr. J. Gurney gave me and several other boys a theme on three great attributes of God, *viz.:* the Omnipotence, the Omniscience, the Omnipresence, divided into the three subjects, and for the best paper he offered a prize, which I was happy enough to win". Mr. Wilson was touched by my intimate knowledge of Mrs. Fry, and said she had sent to him on the very first notice she had received of the calamity in her husband's affairs. He repeated with admiration, "I can never forget *her!*" His conversation was friendly in the extreme to Mr. Kilvert. His approaching untried task in a far land called out our warmest feelings. His were deep, manly and solemn when we bade him adieu. His strength seemed derived from his devotion to the full development of the vast resources of

My father and Walter returned together to London directly after the wedding. Shortly before the start was made for India, Walter wrote to my sister, "Your husband is very tired, I sat up late with your father about his will which was a cheerful topic, and I have been to the City to-day and since gone poney hunting with Mr. Reynolds.

On 20th October a small steamer took us three miles down the Southampton Water where the *Pera* was moored. It was on the deck of that ship that those who stayed behind saw my father for the last time.

Even through the stirring events of those last days Bagehot had contrived to write three articles for that week's *Economist*. A great event, the entire uprooting of our family life, had come and gone. It seemed to have been followed by a lull. On leaving Southampton, while the *Pera* was ploughing the ocean and getting into rough water in the Bay, our quartet, the Bagehots, my sister Julia and I, crossed over to Cowes and explored with leisure the Isle of Wight. There was much rain, and much reading aloud in the evenings. As a finale to our excursion we witnessed a record storm which made us tremble for those at sea. On wandering down to the beach one morning from the hotel at Freshwater, we found the fishermen in all haste pushing and hauling up their boats inland through the shingle. We asked them what was the matter. They looked up and pointed to the sun. A

India in her new position, and having long and thoroughly investigated what *could be known* of his task, he looked at her every interest. His persevering integrity and industry had raised him to high distinction. Without sons but blessed with all the charities of domestic life, surrounded by the refinements which wealth confers, he has only the great aim of doing to mankind an enduring service. He seems to have prepared his mind for conflicts in this untried field of labour. His late calm retreat must have been a refreshment to his mind, which knew but little rest by day or night. He crosses the ocean in a martyr's faith. We shall watch with great anxiety his course : the result of his plans will be the work of time and the wisdom of his agents.—ADELAIDE SOPHIE KILVERT.'

"*There* the scene closes. Memory holds fast the now changed field—*Semper fidelis*. This very slight trace of a few minutes spent in conversation with a great and good man I extract from my Diary, in which the final record must find a place which is here not inserted, and which my sad thoughts anticipated but too truthfully."

great halo surrounded it, and an ominous brightness lighted the sky. A high sea was running. Every minute the wind was increasing in force, and the waves bounded with fury on to the shore, throwing flakes of froth far inland. Bagehot's spirits rose. He thoroughly enjoyed a tumult in the elements. He got us into an open carriage and we set off for the Needles to see the storm at its best. It was bright overhead, but the force of the wind was terrific. Immense waves clashed violently against the Needles, tossing volumes of mist against the cliffs and up into the air. We could not stand upright. Walter alone was quite happy, crawling and clambering over the downs to the cliff's edge. He was greatly amused at my indignation at being buffeted about by the elements and at the hem of my silk *basque* being ripped into shreds. It was most uncomfortable, still no one could help laughing if Walter was amused, seeing that his moods were so contagious. He became particularly happy, when there was any excitement or risk in a situation. The coachman who drove us thought there was a danger of his conveyance being turned over by the wind, and had refused to keep the hood up. After returning to the hotel, while we were lunching, the waiter informed us with an air of importance that Mr. Tennyson and his two sons had been down to the beach to watch the storm, adding: "We shall doubtless have it all in the *Times* to-morrow". Such were his views as to the duties of a Poet Laureate! Incidents such as these are vividly remembered because they were spiced with a choice flavour such as few have the power of infusing into daily events, a power richly possessed by Walter Bagehot. To feel dull or even passive when he was on the scene was impossible. The puzzling mixture in him of the boy, overflowing with high spirits, and the very wise man, itself provoked a speculative kind of amusement.

We returned to The Arches in November, and again read *A Lost Love* aloud, and Bagehot began writing his article on the "History of the Unreformed Parliament and Its Lessons" for the January number of the *National Review*. At no time of his life was the strain of work greater than it was from this November, 1859, to the spring of 1861. He never appeared

overburdened by it and never failed to be good company, but he suffered not infrequently from headache, and would lie down constantly after his work. Considering the amount of travelling his work entailed, it is remarkable that he yet found time to get through the close brain work which his writing involved. While living at The Arches, banking, the business at The Bridge, the management of the *Economist* and the editing of the *National Review* necessitated, as a rule, daily railway journeys either to London, Bristol or Langport, and would have filled to the full the life of an ordinary hard worker. But Bagehot would, over and above all this, write at least two articles each week in the *Economist*, and an article for the *National Review* every other quarter. In December, 1859, he also undertook to examine the candidates for the Joseph Hume Scholarship at University College, London.

On 28th December, 1859, at the age of fifty-nine, Lord Macaulay died. A short but striking paper appeared in the *Economist* of the 31st, written by Bagehot. The appearance of the *History* had greatly interested both Mr. Hutton and Bagehot, and in 1856 Bagehot was inspired to write his notably stimulating essay on Macaulay in the *National Review*. It is as a statesman and as an orator that Bagehot treated Macaulay in the *Economist*. He writes: "There are not many occasions in political life when *full-length* portraiture, either of principles or facts, is wanted, or is likely to be successful. Lord Macaulay's successes are all of this class. He was a politician for great occasions,—when the magnifying character both of his intellect and his imagination could be brought into play with effect, when he might safely be permitted to draw the attention of his hearers to a first principle, bid it expand before their eyes in every direction, and fill all their minds with homely and vivid illustrations of its worth. This kind of power is sometimes very useful, especially when a simple political principle which has grown tiresome and commonplace is to be defended. There are scarcely any of Lord Macaulay's most splendid and effective speeches which do not owe their effective character to some form of this power. When religious toleration had become so hackneyed a word

that it rather annoyed men of liberal minds even to be obliged to defend it, Lord Macaulay delighted in expounding its merits and recalling its full meaning, till it had as new and curious an interest to the minds of his readers or his audience as the commonest texture acquires when you see it beneath the glass of a microscope. He could write in favour of the civil privileges of the Jews with power and force when to every other mind the question was worked utterly dry. His speech on the Dissenters' Chapels Bill was one of the most effective of his orations. In short, his greatest triumphs were gained by bringing to bear on hackneyed, though only half-known, principles of popular right, the influence of his vivid and powerful imagination."

A migration from The Arches to Herd's Hill took place at Christmas and in February one to Paris. It was while we were in Paris that Bagehot wrote the tribute to William Roscoe which Mr. Hutton annexed to the memoir of their mutual friend. This memoir prefaced the collection, in two volumes, of Mr. Roscoe's poems and prose writings which appeared in the spring of 1860, edited by Mr. Hutton.

Madame Mohl and her *milieu* were, as ever, the greatest attraction for us in Paris. Ida von Mohl, our life-long friend, had married, and was no longer acting as her aunt's lieutenant. Her sister Anna, afterwards the wife of the famous Von Helmholtz, reigned in her stead. Many of our friends and acquaintances gathered together on the Friday evenings at 120, Rue du Bac. Lady Augusta Bruce, who first met her husband, Dean Stanley, in the famous Salon; our old friend Mr. Frederick Locker of Claverton days, who married Lady Augusta's sister, Lady Charlotte Bruce; the De Tourguenieffs, who had freed the slaves on their estates in Russia, hence could no longer reside there and had taken refuge in the Quartier St. Germain; all these with many others gathered at that time to the bidding of the fascinating, quaint, kindly genius of the great-little Madame Mohl on Wednesday and Friday evenings. It was the erudite host himself who had most attraction for Bagehot. The dry humour and profound learning of this Oriental scholar had been discovered by

Bagehot on his first visit to Paris in 1851, in the days of the *Coup d'État*. On the occasion of this second visit, Bagehot became intimate with him. Almost daily intercourse took place between M. and Mme. Mohl and our party during our stay in Paris. Breakfast and dinner parties were given in the Rue du Bac for Bagehot to meet M. de Montalembert, M. d'Haussonville, M. de Lavery, Mignet, Giroult, Lomenie and other distinguished people. The De Tourguenieffs were generally among the guests at these entertainments. While in Paris Bagehot prosecuted his acquaintance with M. de Rémusat. He and my sister dined with our old friends M. and Mme. Drouyn de l'Huys. M. Drouyn de l'Huys had stayed with my father and mother at Westbury when he was French Ambassador in England. All this Paris society Bagehot enjoyed. Intellectual attainments secured at once in the Paris of that day a welcome into the best social life of the place. The Parisian was then more logical than the Londoner. Literary distinction was in theory esteemed and admired in both capitals, but the proof of this admiration was more forthcoming, and with a more sympathetic and intelligent interest in the Paris society of those days than it was in the London world.

From Paris the Bagehots travelled to Düsseldorf to consult the famous oculist, the Holfrath Loens. Both were troubled by head and eye-ache, and to both alike was prescribed that white lotion so well known in those days as the cure-all. At Cologne, on the return journey, Bagehot found a letter from Mr. Hutton, proposing that he should stand as a candidate for Parliament for the London University. Bagehot thought over the idea while travelling home, and decided against standing. However, at Herd's Hill, where he went on arriving in England, he found his parents anxious that he should do so. He therefore telegraphed to Mr. Osler to keep the candidature open till he returned to London. On 31st March, at a meeting of the London University graduates, Bagehot proposed Sir John Romilly as their candidate. They, however, chose Bagehot on that occasion. The matter was, however, finally settled at a meeting held in the Freemasons' Tavern, when it was

decided by a majority of four in favour of Sir J. Romilly against Bagehot. Walter had written from London to my sister: "The tide is setting in favour of Romilly as I always said it would".

On 10th February, 1860, Mr. Gladstone had delivered his great Budget speech. "A very different one," writes Bagehot in the *Economist* of 11th February, "from that which he expected to propose at the present time when he brought forward his last great Budget in 1853." Bagehot took this speech as the text for his July article in the *National Review*.[1] His title, however, is "Mr. Gladstone," and his intention was to solve, as far as possible, the *problem* "Mr. Gladstone". "Mr. Gladstone is a problem," he writes. The criticism of the Budget proper appeared in an article in the *Economist* by Bagehot. The article in the *National Review* begins with: "We believe that quarterly essayists have a peculiar mission in relation to the characters of public men. We believe it is their duty to be personal. . . . We allow that personality abounds already, that the names of public men are ever on our lips. *Some* deliberate truth should be spoken of our statesmen and if quarterly essayists do not speak of it, who will?"

In none of Bagehot's writings is found a finer discrimination, a truer imagination, more illuminating humour or subtler power of analysis, than in this exploration into the nature of an interesting, peculiar—to many exasperating—statesman. The seemingly incompatible, and certainly inconsistent creeds which Mr. Gladstone professed during various phases of his career, Bagehot goes far to explain by digging deep down to their foundations.

With insight and skill he weighs in one scale the noble and grand features of Mr. Gladstone's genius, in the other "his greatest peculiarities" which "have helped him to annoy the old Whigs, confound the Country gentlemen, and puzzle the nation generally". "They have," Bagehot goes on to say,

[1] "Speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Finance of the Year and the Treaty of Commerce with France, Delivered in the House of Commons on Friday, 10th February, 1860. Corrected by the Author."

"contributed to bring on him the long array of depreciating adjectives, 'extravagant,' 'inconsistent,' 'incoherent' and 'incalculable'." Enthusiastic in his admiration, Bagehot is emphatic in exposing the elements of inconsistency in Mr. Gladstone's schemes. He writes:—

"It is needless to say Mr. Gladstone is a great orator. . . . The most sincere admirers and the most eager depreciators of Mr. Gladstone are agreed on this point, and it is almost the only point on which they are agreed. . . . Mr. Gladstone has, beyond every other man in his generation, what we may call the oratorical *impulse*. . . . He has the *didactic* impulse. He has the 'courage of his ideas!' He will convince his audience. He has a *nature*, as Coleridge might have said, towards his audience. He is sure, if they only knew what he knows, they would feel as he feels, and believe as he believes. And by this he conquers. This living faith, this enthusiasm, this confidence, call it as we will, is an extreme power in human affairs. One *croyant*, said the Frenchman, is a greater power than fifty *incrédules*. In the composition of an orator, the hope, the credulous hope, that he will convince his audience, is the *primum mobile*, it is the primitive incentive which is the spring of his influence and the source of his power. Mr. Gladstone has this incentive in perhaps an excessive and dangerous measure. Whatever may be right or wrong in pure finance, in abstract political economy, it is certain that no one save Mr. Gladstone would have come down with the Budget of 1860 to the Commons of 1860. No other man would have believed that such a proposal would have a chance. Yet after the warning—the disheartening warning of a reluctant Cabinet—Mr. Gladstone came down from a depressing sick-bed, and semi-bronchitis hovering about him, entirely prevailed for the moment, and three parts conquered after all. We will not say that *the world* is given to men of this temperament and this energy; on the contrary, there is often a turn in the tide, the ovation of the spring may be the prelude to unpopularity in the autumn; but we see that *audiences* are given them; we see that unimpressible men are deeply moved by them—that the driest topics of legislation

and finance are for the instant affected by them—that the prolonged effects of that momentary influence may be felt for many years, sometimes for centuries. The orator has a dominion over the critical instant, and the consequences of the decisions taken during that instant may last long after the orator and the audience have both passed away.

"Nor is the didactic impulse the only one which is essential to a great political orator; nor is it the only one which Mr. Gladstone has. We say it with respect; but he has the *contentious* impulse. He illustrates the distinction between the pacific and the peaceful. On all great questions, on the controversies of States and Empires, Mr. Gladstone is the most pacific of mankind. He hates the very rumour of war; he trusts in moral influence; he detests the bare idea of military preparations. He will not believe that preparations are necessary till the enemy is palpable." (How convincingly the truth of these words was proved years after Bagehot's death, when the Gordon tragedy took place.) . . . "At the present moment no Englishman, not Mr. Bright himself, *feels* so little the impulse to arm. He will not believe in a war till he sees men fighting. He is the most pacific of our statesmen in theory and in policy.

"When you hear Mr. Gladstone, he is about the most combative. He can bear a good deal about the politics of Europe; but let a man question the fees on vatting, or the change in the game certificate, or the stamp on bills of lading—what melodious thunders of loquacious wrath! The world, he hints, is likely to end at such observations, and it is dreadful that they should be made by the honourable member who made them,—by the honourable member who four years ago said so-and-so, and five years before that moved, etc. etc. The number of well-intentioned and tedious persons whom Mr. Gladstone annually scolds into a latent dislike of him must be considerable. . . . No one, indeed, half guides, half follows the moods of his audience more quickly, more easily, than Mr. Gladstone. There is a little playfulness in his manner, which contrasts with the dryness of his favourite topics, and the intense gravity of his earnest character. He has the same sort of control over

the minds of those he is addressing that a good driver has over the animal he guides: he feels the minds of his hearers as the driver the mouths of his horses.

"The species of intellect that is required for this task is pre-eminently the advocate's intellect. . . . We scarcely think, with Mr. Gladstone, that this style of oratory is the very highest, though it is very natural that he should think so, for it exactly expresses the oratory in which he is the greatest living master. Mr. Gladstone's conception of oratory, in theory, and in practice, is the oratory of Pitt, not the oratory of Chatham or of Burke; it is the oratory of adaption. We do not deny that this is the kind of oratory which is most generally useful, the only kind which is commonly permissible, the only one which in general would not be a *bore;* but we must remember that there is an eloquence of great principles which the hearers scarcely heed, and do not accept—such as, in its highest parts, is the eloquence of Burke—we must remember that there is an eloquence of great passions, of high-wrought intense feeling, which is nearly independent of the peculiarities of its audience, because it appeals to our elemental human nature—which is the same, or much the same, in almost every audience, which is everywhere and always susceptible to the union of vivid genius and eager passion. Such as this last was, if we may trust tradition, the eloquence of Chatham, the source of his rare, magical, and occasional power. Mr. Gladstone has neither of these. Few speakers equally great have left so few passages which can be quoted—so few which embody great principles in such a manner as to be referred to by coming generations. He has scarcely given us a sentence that lives in the memory; nor is his declamation, facile and effective as it always is, the very highest declamation: it is a nearly perfect expression of intellectual sentiment, but it wants the volcanic power of primitive passion.

"The prominence of advocacy in Mr. Gladstone's mind is in appearance, though not in reality, diminished by the purity and intensity of his zeal. There is an elastic heroism about him. When he begins to speak, we may know that we are going to hear what we shall not agree with. We may

believe that the measures he proposes are mischievous; we may smile at the emphasis with which some of their minutiæ are insisted upon; but we inevitably feel that we have left the ordinary earth. We know that high sentiments will be appealed to by one who feels high sentiments; that strong arguments will be strongly stated by one who believes that argument should decide controversy. We know that we are beyond the realm of the Patronage Secretary, we have felt behind us the doctrine that corruption is the ruling power in popular assemblies, that patronage is the purchase-money of power. We are not alleging that in the real world in which we live there is some truth—more or less of truth—in these lower maxims; but they do not rule in Mr. Gladstone's world. He has—and it is one of the springs of great power—a real faith in the higher parts of human nature; he believes, with all his heart and soul and strength, that there *is* such a thing as truth; he has the soul of a martyr with the intellect of an advocate. . . .

"The great faculties we have mentioned give Mr. Gladstone, it is needless to say, an extraordinary influence in English politics. England is a country governed mainly by labour and speech. Mr. Gladstone will work and can speak, and the result is what we see. With a flowing eloquence and a lofty heroism; with an acute intellect and endless knowledge; with courage to conceive large schemes, and a voice which will persuade men to adopt those schemes—it is not singular that Mr. Gladstone is of himself a power in parliamentary life. He can do there what no one else living can do.

"But the effect of these peculiar faculties is by no means unmixedly favourable. In almost every one of them some faulty tendency is latent, which may produce bad effects—in Mr. Gladstone's case has often done so, perhaps does so still. His greatest characteristic, as we have indicated, is the singular vivacity of his oratorical impulse. But great as is the immediate power which a vehement oratorical propensity, when accompanied by the requisite faculties, secures to the possessor, the advantage of possessing it, or rather of being subject to it, is by no means without an alloy. We have all heard that Paley said he knew nothing against some one *but* that he was

a popular preacher. And Paley knew what he was saying. The oratorical impulse is a *disorganising* impulse. The higher faculties of the mind require a certain calm, and the excitement of oratory is unfavourable to that calm. . . .

"Nor is cool reflection the only higher state of mind which the oratorical impulse interferes with; we believe that it is singularly unfavourable also to the exercise of the higher kind of imagination. Several great poets have written good dramatic harangues; but no great practical orator has ever written a great poem. The creative imagination requires a singular calm: it is 'the unravished bride of quietness,' as the poets say, 'the foster-child of silence and slow time'. No great work has ever been produced except after a long interval of still and musing meditations. The oratorical impulse interferes with this. It breaks the exclusive brooding of the mind upon the topic; it brings in a new set of ideas, the faces of the audience and the passions of listening men; it jerks the mind, if the expression may be allowed, just when the delicate poetry of the mind is crystallising into symmetry. The process is stayed, and the result is marred.

"Mr. Gladstone has suffered from both these bad effects of the oratorical temperament. . . .

"We have now reached the term of the destructive period. We cannot abolish all our laws; we have few remaining with which educated men find fault. The questions which remain are questions of construction—how the lower classes are to be admitted to a share of political power without absorbing the whole power; how the natural union of Church and State is to be adapted to an age of divided religious opinion, and to the necessary conditions of a parliamentary government. These, and such as these, are the future topics of our home policy. And on these the voice of the nation will never be very distinct. Destruction is easy, construction is very difficult. A statesman who will hereafter learn what our real public opinion is, will not have to regard loud agitators, but to disregard them; will not have to yield to a loud voice, but to listen for a still small voice; will have to seek for the opinion which is treasured in secret rather than for that which is noised abroad."

When Bagehot thus analysed Mr. Gladstone's gifts and character the statesman was at the zenith of his fame. In after years, referring to Mr. Gladstone, Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff says: "Of him, too, Bagehot writes much and wisely. It is easy for us who have seen how all ended, to form a judgment of that notable person; but Bagehot in 1860, at a moment when Mr. Gladstone was at his very best, wrote as follows: 'If Mr. Gladstone will accept the conditions of his age; if he will guide himself by the mature, settled, and cultured reflection of his time, and not by its loud and noisy organs; if he will look for that which is thought rather than for that which is said, he may leave a great name, be useful to his country, may steady and balance his own mind. But if not, not. The coherent efficiency of his career will depend on the guide which he takes, the index which he obeys, the δαίμων which he consults.'"

Mr. Gladstone had been very much impressed by Bagehot's writings, and the year before Bagehot wrote this article had expressed his admiration and had sought Bagehot's acquaintance. All intercourse between himself and Bagehot would have been obviously of advantage to the latter, seeing that Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer and Bagehot director of the *Economist*. That he wrote these criticisms at that particular moment, is a clear proof—were proof wanting—of his absolute, disinterested independence.

If Bagehot was courageous, Mr. Gladstone was generous in his view of this outspoken criticism of himself. After receiving from my sister the volume of reprinted essays which contained it, published after Bagehot's death, he wrote: "Some of the articles are not new to me. I remember feeling, and I still feel, how true the article on myself is in the parts least favourable to my vanity. . . . Undoubtedly your husband was a man of most remarkable gifts, and among them was a singular discernment as to public characters, and a not less excellent faculty for embodying the results in literary form."

CHAPTER XI.

INDIA.

INDIA, and all that was happening there in connection with our family, was to Bagehot, no less than to my sisters and myself, the most absorbing subject of interest during the winter, spring and summer months of 1859 and 1860. The arrival of the Indian mail was an all-important event. Everything that concerned my father was reflected into Bagehot's life through the natural sympathy existing between them. As he wrote in a letter quoted on a future page, "I had a constant habit of referring to his mind and keeping up a sort of mental dialogue with him," and in his letters to Bagehot my father wrote as he would have conversed with him, entirely freely and without reserve. To no one else did he write in so confidential a strain alike on public and private matters. Bagehot was an ideal depository for all confidences, as he possessed discretion, discernment, and a fine tact. Extracts from my father's letters will show how constantly my father's mind also was in touch with Bagehot's, after he left for India. Bagehot's answers to these letters were returned to him from India; but no trace of them can now be found. In December, 1860, he wrote to my sister: "The box from India has just come and I have examined it, but it contains nothing of any interest. *My own letters come back, which gave me a turn.*" Not being in the habit of keeping letters, he probably destroyed these at once.

The last act in my father's career is dwelt on somewhat lengthily in this Life of Walter Bagehot, not only because it is distinctly connected with Bagehot's position among the politicians of his day, but because it directly influenced his own personal attitude towards public affairs. Both my father and Bagehot had what Bagehot designated as *experiencing natures.*

Both natures expanded in proportion as their circumstances expanded. The colossal character of the work in India that my father had undertaken, and the buoyant confident spirit in which he tackled it, appealed to Bagehot's imagination, and quickened his own feeling of self-confidence. He found himself in close intimate contact with work which was on a bigger scale than any he had previously coped with, work which was, at that moment, of momentous importance to the empire. Bagehot was called by some of his contemporaries "a sort of supplementary Chancellor of the Exchequer". This honorary position was first earned when he found himself in the position of interpreting my father's great work in India to the public in England through the pages of the *Economist*.

My father lost no opportunity of impressing upon Bagehot the strong antipathy he felt against any personal element entering into the criticism of his measures, or into any public question whatsoever. As Bagehot said in his memoir of my father: "Few men ever transacted so much important business with so little of the pettiness of personal feeling". But even if my father had not expressed this antipathy, it would have been impossible for Bagehot to have been guided, even unconsciously, when writing of him, by personal interest or affection. His taste in literary matters was morally fastidious, and a clear-sighted sincerity alone could satisfy it. He had "a concern for the *simple truth*," Matthew Arnold's words written when first he recognised in Bagehot's essays this purity of aim. Nevertheless, if intimacy with my father had been a lucky turn in fortune's wheel for Bagehot, it was no less a happy turn for my father to find so able and appreciative an exponent of his Indian measures as Bagehot proved to be. Bagehot estimated the value of my father's policy together with my father's character and power of carrying out that policy. What is wise in a strong man may be foolish in a weaker man. Bagehot recognised the value of my father's purity and moral strength, the force and simplicity of his nature, and the great power he possessed of succeeding in carrying out his aims. Courage is required to write favourably of those who are known to belong to you. This courage Bagehot possessed;

moreover, he could well stand the ordeal of frankly owning his appreciation for his father-in-law's public work. Statesmen attended to what Bagehot said because of the impartial and obviously sincere manner in which he conducted all controversy. Politicians of all parties recognised that Bagehot stood outside the pale of political strife, its frictions, jealousies, compromises and expediencies. Sir Charles Wood, as Secretary of State for India, attended to what Bagehot wrote in the *Economist* about Indian matters; Gladstone watched what he wrote, not only of himself but of others; Sir Stafford Northcote appealed to Bagehot in a financial difficulty, and at once adopted his suggestions. Sir M. Grant Duff said truly: "he [Bagehot] was in his proper place as a deeply interested spectator and critic of public affairs". Public men knew that they were being watched by Bagehot, and were in their turn deeply interested in his criticisms of their political actions. Bagehot might drape his published writings with a reserve and moderation becoming to the discussion of public matters in an authority such as the *Economist* newspaper, but those who were intimate with him at home knew how deep could be his affections, how enthusiastic his admirations, and how justly he appreciated the great qualities in my father.

After arriving in India, my father wrote:—

"GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
"CALCUTTA, *8th December*, 1859.

"DEAR WALTER,

"There was an impression in some quarters that my appointment would not be very agreeable to Lord Canning, but his letters which met me on my way out and on my arrival here show very much the contrary. I cannot express in terms too strong the willingness of every one here to aid me in every way. It may be that they cannot do much, but certainly the will is not wanting.

"I have had a great deputation of the Chamber of Commerce and the India Planters' Association this week to present an address, and another from the Native Association. They are very confiding and express themselves very willing to be

taxed if done fairly. I don't think they will be a difficult people to manage."

The following letters from Lord Canning were those to which my father alluded. He confided them to Bagehot's care.

"CALCUTTA,
"*22nd September*, 1859.

"DEAR MR. WILSON,

"By the last mail I have heard that your appointment is certain, and Sydney tells me that you will leave England in October.

"I therefore write this to meet you as you set foot on the first outpost of our Indian Empire (not a cheerful specimen of it), and to carry to you an early and very sincere welcome. I am only sorry that it will not be possible for me to greet you in person when you land in Calcutta, my plans for a visit to the N.W.P. and Punjab have long been made and meetings with the native chiefs fixed.

"I start on the 9th or 10th of next month; how long it may be before I return to Calcutta I cannot yet say. I hope to pass a part at least of the next hot season in the hills, but if need be I shall come down to Bengal again at the end of April or May before going to Simla. But I am very desirous to see you before you set to work, and as you will get to Calcutta just at the time of year when the journey can be made with ease and pleasantly, I would propose to you to join the Camp, as soon as you conveniently can do so after landing; seven or eight days will take you to Agra and two days more to Delhi; if I shall have reached that distance before you overtake me you will see much that is worth seeing of men and things military and civil whilst in Camp and under circumstances of unusual interest, and you will realise at once the difference between Calcutta and India, which is not easily taken in at first, great as it is. There are several points upon which I wish to speak with you, connected with our finances, and which a few days of talk will dispose of more effectually than reams of letters; five weeks' absence from Calcutta will enable you to spend at least a fortnight in Camp and to see

much with your own eyes by the way, including most of our great public works. I cannot at present propose a distinct plan to you because I do not at all know by which steamer in October you will leave England, but as soon as I hear this, I will describe a more definite arrangement than is possible at this moment. There is another matter, you will probably find it very difficult to suit yourself at once with a house in Calcutta. I do not know whether any of your family accompany you, but if so the difficulty will be increased. I will therefore leave orders that apartments in a wing of Government House shall be ready for yourself and yours on your arrival. My whole establishment will, almost to a man, be up country, but you will find no difficulty in making provision for household wants. Should your daughters be with you it might perhaps be more agreeable to them in your absence to fix their residence at Barrackpore, fifteen miles from Calcutta; if so one of the houses in the park shall be at their disposal, but this is a subsidiary arrangement which can easily be settled when the time comes. I shall no doubt hear something certain of your movements before I leave Calcutta. Upon doing so I will send another letter to meet you at Galle.

"Believe me,
"Yours very faithfully,
"CANNING."

"CAWNPORE,
"*4th November*, 1859.

"DEAR MR. WILSON,

"You will have received at Aden a letter which I wrote before yours of the 25th August reached me. I send this to catch you at Madras, and to assure you that you shall find everything in Calcutta ready for your reception to such a degree as I hope to spare you all inconvenience and trouble. In saying this I refer to bodily comforts mainly; but pray dismiss from your mind all suspicion that you will in more important matters meet with any antagonism, open or silent, on the part of Officers of Government. I see that Sir C. Wood

has this apprehension as well as yourself, but I will almost undertake to say that none shall show itself, and I will confidently answer for its being put down if it does. I will send to meet you at Calcutta, a memorandum strictly private of the disposition, usefulness, capacity or incapacity of those with whom you will be brought into immediate contact; you will, I think, find it of service and reassuring. I entirely concur with you as to the blot in India of the divided responsibility of the financial and revenue department. I do not think that you will find any financial officer of the Government of India to disagree with you on this point, certainly none whose opinion is worth having, but if there be such, depend upon it, his opinion will not be in your way.

"I will write to you again to Calcutta respecting the arrangements for your run up country. I got a letter from Sir C. Wood yesterday, 3rd October, in which he seems to hope that I would not leave Calcutta before your arrival. I would willingly have stayed, if that were possible, but it was not so, after the engagements I had made with the native chiefs, and moreover my presence in Oude and elsewhere has been productive already of results which will be of great and immediate effect upon our financial task. The Commander-in-Chief is in Camp with me, and will remain until you come up. I will endeavour so to spin out the next business of my tour (I leave this place to-morrow) as not to pass beyond Agra before you arrive. An officer of my staff will present himself on board the steamer as soon as she anchors at Garden Reach and shall conduct you to Government House, where altho' necessarily denuded greatly of household, by my being in Camp, I hope that Mrs. Wilson and her daughters will find themselves fairly comfortable.

"I beg you to offer them my hearty welcome, and also my regret that I cannot signify it in person.

"Believe me, dear Mr. Wilson,

"Yours sincerely,

"CANNING."

"CAMP AROUN,
"*22nd November*, 1859.

"DEAR MR. WILSON,

"I write this to meet you at Calcutta, where you will arrive about the 28th. I am sanguine that a few days' interview with those, amongst whom your labours will lie, will dispel any apprehension you have entertained of thwarting or opposition or even of lukewarm aid.

"In a recent letter, Sir C. Wood expressed a hope that I should remain in Calcutta to help you against any such discouragements, but I could not, without risk of causing suspicions and much mischief, have put off my meetings with the native chiefs, and the rewarding and recementing of relations with them, even if I had received his letter in time, and so far as your own facilities for your work are concerned it is quite unnecessary. I dare say that capital will be made by the newspapers and elsewhere of my being absent when you arrive, but this is of no great moment; I think, however, it is a reason (though a minor one) for your coming on a visit to the Camp, as soon as you can do so conveniently. The fact of your having been in personal communication with the Governor-General and returning, as will be obvious, armed with his fullest support, will be the best possible antidote to any mischievous representation; it will also help your way with all your colleagues and highest subordinates, but the strongest reasons are in the real business we have in hand, the re-casting of the financial department, the so-called license tax and the paper currency, and there are some minor matters.

"As regards the financial department, I am strongly inclined to carry out the scheme which was proposed by Lord Dalhousie in 1854 and 1855 but rejected by the Court of Directors, for joining the home and financial departments, but I think that some modification of that scheme is necessary. The license tax is too long a chapter to enter upon here. I recommend you to ask Mr. Harrington to give you verbally a full account of the course that measure took; there has been a good deal of misunderstanding about it; still it is not yet in a right shape. I heard a day or two ago that none of the local

Governments, except Bombay, had sent in their opinions on it. I am very anxious about the paper currency. I look to it as one of our surest though an indirect means of relief. The care must be to make it safe from abuse in times of temptation to the Government. My present opinion is that there is no way of doing this so satisfactorily as by giving to Parliament a control over the issue. Wood tells me you are favourable to the measure, but he does not say in what shape, nor do I clearly know his own views upon it. The legal tender of sovereigns is a small question. I am opposed to it, but if the paper currency is taken in hand it will cease to be called for.

"As to my movements I shall be at Agra on the 26th. I shall spin out my stay there but shall not be able to extend it beyond the 6th or 7th of December. Thence the Camp will march (12 miles a day) to Delhi, but I shall stop at Muttra, or near to it, for three days. This will bring me to Delhi about the 21st or 22nd December. You will of course be sworn in at once on your arrival. I can hardly judge how much time you will require to look about you and to examine the above-mentioned subjects, but if you could start within a week of the 20th of November, you would easily come up with the Camp several marches this side of Delhi. Lt.-Col. Gale, Secty. P.W.D., who probably has made the voyage from England with you, has to join me forthwith, but I have told him I can dispense with him till I get to Delhi. His convoy might be useful to you. Nobody knows the road better, or what there is worth seeing upon it. Less than a month would suffice to spend a week in Camp and to see everything of note from Calcutta to Delhi.

"Let me add that the sooner any man who has to deal with the administration of this country learns the immeasurable differences there are between Calcutta and India, the better. I would have given the best year of my life to have made this tour I am now making before 1857. You already know that the flag staff house at Barrackpore is at the disposal of Mrs. Wilson.

"Sincerely yours,

"CANNING."

"CAMP AROUN,
"*22nd November*, 1859.

"DEAR MR. WILSON,

"This will be delivered to you by Captain Delane, 2nd in command of my body-guard, who has orders to go on board of your steamer as soon as it arrives, and to conduct yourself and Mrs. Wilson to Government House. I hope, more than I expect, that you will find things comfortable in the wing which has been prepared for you; the whole house is more or less in the hands of workmen for its triennial repair which I was obliged to postpone last year when they were due, thereby giving the white ants an extra chance. The person in charge of Government House is named Westfield; he has often ushered you into Lady Palmerston's drawing-room. I think you will find him useful, in bringing servants and providing for other wants, at all events he is very willing to be so; I mean of course servants for personal use, he has his own staff for the care of the house. I don't think I have anything more to say in this note than again to bid you and yours heartily welcome. The letters which accompany this you had better open in some quieter spot than the deck of a disgorging steamer.

"Sincerely yours,
"CANNING.

"P.S.—Captain Delane is brother to Delane of the *Times*."

On his voyage out and while in India my father kept up a constant correspondence with Sir Charles Wood and other officials, copies of which he sent to Bagehot. Out of a few of these very lengthy letters the following extracts outline the work my father had in hand. Soon after his arrival in Calcutta he wrote:—

"*8th December.*

"MY DEAR SIR CHARLES WOOD,

"In prosecuting preliminary enquiries before going to Lord Canning, the great difficulty I have experienced is the impossibility of obtaining information, not from a want of will to give it, but from the difficulty of reaching it.

"A Chancellor of the Exchequer in England would find

it a difficult task to arrange his annual budget and especially to impose new taxes if he had to consult every revenue officer in the country as to what would prove best. He would have as many and as conflicting opinions as we have here, and his position would not be mended if, not content with offering an opinion if asked or not, many of them were to rush into print and each to show that some tax or other could not be borne. The truth is there is so much to be said against any and every tax taken separately that it is not difficult to raise a prejudice against them all, and thus make any tax difficult. But what I feel is, that as all are unpopular the best course is to take that which will best bear discussion, and firmly stand by it. I do not believe in any serious opposition if fair ground is taken and a firm front maintained.

"J. W."

On the next day he writes to Sir Charles Trevelyan with whom he had discussed public matters at Madras on his way to Calcutta :—

"GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
"*9th December.*

"DEAR TREVELYAN,

"I have now had ten days clear work here and begin to have some measure of the extent of work to be done. Departmentally alone it is enormous; the whole fabric seems to have arisen without any attempt at any general system or plan, and with regard to Finance and Expenditure and checks, including pay and audit, we seem here to be much in the same condition as we were in England, under our old Exchequer system, with numerous separate audits, and with little or no Treasury control, and in those days with a very imperfect Parliamentary control. But perhaps one of the most imperfect departments is the Commissariat. I believe we shall have to go through here much the same process that we did in England in order to reduce everything into a system. No one is more familiar with the reforms which have been made of late years in England than yourself—and especially as regards the Commissariat branch—I have sent for all the minutes and regulations in England upon these subjects.

"Upon the plans of estimates, sanction, and budget I think from our conversation the other day we are pretty well agreed.

"May I express a hope that you will instruct your officers entrusted with the settlement of the imposts that no expression will be used that can be construed into an exemption from any general tax to which they in common with others may be exposed, so that the difficulties (theoretical, I think) which have been raised in respect of the Bengal Zemindars may not arise in respect to new settlement.

"We arrived in Calcutta on the 20th all the better for our short but agreeable stay at Madras, and the fresh fruit you sent on board. I start to-morrow for Meerut and Delhi to join Lord Canning for a week or ten days. I shall be absent five weeks. Let me hear from you as often and at as great length upon these to me all-absorbing topics as you conveniently can.

"I am very anxious for the result of the Military Finance Committee.

"J. WILSON."

To Sir Charles Wood my father writes: "A fair Income Tax has everything now to commend it. (1) The merchants one and all have declared publicly and to me privately that they are all in favour of it, if generally extended. (2) The press has done the same. (3) It would give us far more money. (4) And above all, it would be the introduction of a principle of taxation which, being just and general, may lay the basis for a sounder financial system, and of a revenue to the State flexible and adapted to emergencies. As to the practicability of assessing it, I have no fear if we only take powers sufficiently large and discretionary to assess Schedule D somewhat in accordance with the habits of the people, giving a wide margin to the Commissioners of the districts to determine the precise plan.

"P.S.—Above all things we must take our stand upon some intelligible principle in taxation and stick firmly to it—vacillation and hesitation will ruin anything in this country.

They like to be ruled if you are only just and equal in your dealings. At the present moment they are not in the mood to resist anything. I am glad to find that your views and my own are perfectly in unison, so that I may securely proceed without fearing any cross that might mar our best exertions. If I find Lord C. as well agreed with me, I shall propose to act at once on my return to Calcutta, as something must be done with Harrington's bill which is now lying over referred to a Committee."

After arriving at the Camp my father writes to Sir Charles Wood :—

"We have had to-day a visit in Camp from Sir R. Montgomery, but who has left this evening for the Punjab. We took the opportunity of having a long discussion upon the subject of the new taxes best adapted for India, and particularly for this part. Lord Canning and I had full four hours of it. I read to them all I had written to you upon the subject.

"The conclusions arrived at with 'perfect unanimity' were that the License duty is to be regarded as a permanent tax, but the Income Tax to be passed for five years, subject then to revision and reconsideration."

"CALCUTTA, *1st February.*

"MY DEAR SIR C. WOOD,

"I shall be glad to find that you adopt the suggestion of sending out Mr. Durand. We shall have so much to do with the military departments to bring them under control and order, that I shall be thankful for the assistance of one so well versed practically in this department—it is the chief point when I want assistance and support. I must not, however, say this much without adding that so far as Lord Clyde and Sir W. Mansfield are concerned, nothing could be better than their conduct in respect to affording every assistance and faculty in their power.

"We shall have a great labour in military affairs, in which department there is reason for enormous deduction. I shall be thankful if in any arrangement you make you can give me additional military practical aid to assist in reduction. You

know my views as to the necessity, if we are to have efficiency, of having departmental responsibility."

"GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
"*4th February*, 1860.

"DEAR SIR W. MANSFIELD,

"I thank you very much for your letter of the 26th ult., because it lays bare and touches what seems to me to have been the real source of weakness and extravagance in India—divided authority in military matters. I become daily more of opinion that until we have one superior Military head for the whole Indian Army for all military administration, and one supreme Civil head, not in theory but in reality, responsible for military expenditure all over India, in short till we have our Horse Guards and our War Department for all India, as we have in England for the whole British Empire, it will be hopeless to make those reductions which are absolutely required, and I will add until all really military forces are under that single head."

From "The Camp, Delhi," my father wrote, 30th December, 1859:—

"MY DEAR WALTER,

"Lord Canning is so well satisfied and pleased with the Note plan, that I am to introduce a bill into the Legislation Council on my return to Calcutta. I have also all but settled my scheme of taxation. I mean to have an Income Tax proper, giving large discretion to the local officers and commissioners as to the mode of levying the tax under Schedule D. Our chief plan will be to assess the whole town at an aggregate sum, leaving the people in the town to apportion the assessment among themselves subject to the approval of an appeal to, by individuals, against what they think unfair, our own officers or commissioners. Then all classes will be included holders, Zemindars, public officers, from the Governor-General down.

"This country is magnificent and full of the most marvellous evidence of ancient grandeur. There is, however, no sympathy between the Europeans and the Natives and no

bending to its increase. There is not the slightest Social communication.

"I cannot tell you how much advantage I have derived from coming up here. I shall have seen more of India in the first two months of my residence, both of its people and its surface, than most men do in a lifetime. Everywhere I see the European Officers and often many of the leading Bankers and Merchants (Natives).

"Our plan is to return and meet Lord Canning again in Camp a week hence, to spend one day and to get down to Calcutta, visiting Agra and many places on our way, about the 20th of January. We shall have travelled nearly 3000 miles up and down. With love to all."

To my sisters and myself the unofficial side of life was recounted :—

"The Camp, Meerut,
"*20th December*, 1859.

"My dear Eliza, Julia and Emmy,

". . . We left on Saturday morning the 10th, crossed the river in the Governor-General's barge to the south side of the Hooghly where the Station is, and found the State carriage (like one of the Queen's on the Great Western) prepared for us, in which we travelled in as good a style as we could upon any English line to Runnegunge, the present limit of the line, 120 miles. It was a curious feeling when I had brought to my mind the planning of this line, and particularly the Branch to Runnegunge, which I remember deciding at Fontainville about ten years ago.[1] Thus far we passed through a flat, rich country teeming with people and the richest of crops of every description. A goodly country to bear taxes!

"From Runnegunge we rode into the high hilly country which extends all the way to the banks of the Ganges, which river we crossed at Benares; that part of the journey occupied sixty hours, resting only about *two hours* at one of the Bungalows each day for the one meal which we took, saving cold

[1] When Secretary to the Indian Board of Control my father had done important work by establishing railway services in many parts of India which up to that time were difficult of access.

tea, biscuits, and oranges as we journeyed on. The country all the way is perfectly beautiful. The flat parts all flanked with fine trees, tamarinds, mango groves, and every variety of large tree, in a park-like fashion. On each hand, at less or greater distances, we had magnificent ranges of hills rising in the most picturesque manner, rugged and pointed in their outlines, clothed with jungle wood to the top and resembling the steep hills near Chepstow. One hill, almost the only bare one, was a facsimile of Arthur's Seat at Edinburgh. We arrived at the banks of the Ganges (follow me on the map) opposite Benares just as the sun was rising on Tuesday morning, and as we crossed the river I certainly never saw a more imposing City view than the *Holy City* presented stretching along the banks of the river, with its mosques and minarettes. We drove direct to the College of Benares where we were taken in by Mr. Griffith, the Chief Resident of the College. The Maharaja of Benares, the wealthiest Native of the country, had heard of my probable visit, and in order to have the first intimation had horsemen posted round Mr. Griffith's for the whole day before. He wished to visit us, but I postponed receiving him till my return when I should have more leisure. He sent, however, presents of flowers, fruits, sweetmeats, etc. We rested all the morning with Mr. Griffith, who knew us at Westbury, his father being the late Clergyman of Corseling; we visited the College where we found Dulup Sing's[1] cousin one of the scholars, whom the people regard as the real representative of the family.

"On Thursday morning we started by railway from Allahabad to Cawnpore where we remained only two hours to dine. Our Bungalow was close to the place of the Massacre, which we went to see with Mr. Drummond, one of the best Officers of the District. We started by dark again and came on direct for the Camp, which we reached early on Sunday morning and found a most comfortable tent, with sitting-room in the centre and a bedroom on each side of it prepared for

[1] Dulup Sing had visited my father at Fontainville, Westbury, where the natives of Wiltshire had viewed him and his black servants as emanations of the evil one on account of their complexions.

us next to Lord Canning's. Everything in Camp, including tents, is in duplicate, so that when you arrive morning after morning you seem always to go into the same place again. You find everything in the new spot just as you left it two hours before in the last place. Everything is made as agreeable and comfortable as possible for us. We move daily in one of Lord Canning's carriages appropriated to our use. We have Lord Clyde pitched close to us. We have General Mansfield and Lady Mansfield in the Camp and a great many public officers. Yesterday we had Sir Robert Montgomery from the Punjab, with whom Lord Canning and I had a long conference. My business goes on as well as I could wish. Last night Lady Canning gave a dinner party, Lord Clyde, General Mansfield and Lady M. and many others were there. It was a curious sight when we came out of the tent with Lord Clyde to come away, to find a magnificently caparisoned elephant waiting for him to take him home. The beast quietly kneeled down. His Lordship walked up a ladder and seated himself on his high throne; the animal quietly rose, and proceeded with dignified steps on his way, Lord Clyde being as high as the top of the second storey window of an English house.

"This morning we made a most imposing entry into this Station (the cradle of the Mutiny). All the country through the whole line of march seemed turned out. In the Station there are some thousands of troops, English and Seikh, all paraded, and the whole scene was most striking. The Camp alone consists of 20,000 persons of all classes who move every day. You can conceive the space of ground which the whole streets of tents cover. The country is everywhere extremely quiet, the people feel themselves completely beaten, are annoyed at their folly and failure, and more than ever look with astonishment upon British courage, intrepidity, and power. They seem eager only that the past shall be forgotten. Their leaders are all dead or taken. The prestige of England never stood higher. They are ready to submit to anything and to pay any taxes we impose; they are only astonished at our generosity and leniency after the deep offence we have

received. Lord Canning's progress through the country has had the best effect. I am glad I have come to the Camp. I could not have learned so much in any other way. It is likely I shall go from Delhi to Lahore and Umritza in the Punjab and get back to Calcutta about the 18th of January. We shall stay longer at the places on our way back.

"P.S.—The weather is brilliant, sunny, and cold."

On 18th February my father brought forward his Budget in the Legislative Council at Calcutta. Bagehot wrote in the *Economist* of 24th March: "Mr. Wilson showed that the real Indian deficit was £4,060,809, and including home charges, was £9,016,909. He had, then, more than a £9,000,000 deficit to cover. We extract from the *Bombay Gazette* the following: 'On Saturday, 18th February, Mr. Wilson rose in his place in the Legislative Council to make the statement about which England and India have been vainly speculating for the last six months. The demand for tickets to be present on the occasion seems to have been quite unprecedented in Calcutta, and, indeed, the people of the metropolis are now beginning to enjoy something of the excitement of Parliamentary life.'"

My father wrote to Bagehot:—

"GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
"CALCUTTA, *22nd February*, 1860.

"MY DEAR WALTER,

"They yield. I brought forward my Budget on Saturday. I cannot say with much doubt of its success, but it was certainly rather audacious. For six months they had been discussing whether they should have an Income Tax or a License Tax, or a Tobacco Duty, and I have given them all three, and so far from grumbling, all parties are rather vieing with each other in its support. *The Englishman*, the rabid opponent of Government, is now the loudest in approval. The *Friend of India*, you will see, is for him, very complimentary, and all the other papers approve; no one opposes. Even the Bengal Zemindars, who have seen their pretensions to exemption swept away for ever, approve. All these bills will pass without opposition. I also begin to see my way very

clear to some very large reductions. The prosperity of the country is great, and its repose and tranquillity beyond precedent. The heavy hand of power shown during the Mutiny, and the great moderation pursued since, have effectually calmed everything. I shall be curious to see how the English papers will pick me to pieces.

"You must deal with my speech and my policy as you think best, without thinking of *me* at all. At this distance I may be treated as a stranger."

"*23rd February*, 1860.

"I wrote to you yesterday with copies of my speech. I write to-day to explain what I find out is the real source of the enthusiasm, for no other word would express the fact, with which my schemes have been received. Yesterday some of the chief merchants called upon me and said, 'Now, Sir, we know what to be about. We have never seen such *heart* in the trade of Calcutta before. We never had any *knowledge* before, and therefore we could not have *confidence*. When we contemplated transactions for the future we always felt in a terror that some sudden unforeseen financial disaster would upset us by making a light moving market. Now we see our way clear upon public matters as we do upon our own. We would gladly have paid double what you take for such a boon.' This is their language and one can understand it.

"They added too, 'The policy inaugurated holds out to us indefinite extension of trade, especially as we see the firm hand with which the Government will be carried on'."

In the *Economist* of 31st March, Bagehot wrote a leader of five columns on the Indian Budget, explaining in detail the policy my father was inaugurating. He ended his article by the following paragraph: "Such is the scheme which Mr. Wilson has proposed for remedying the financial difficulties of India; and, though the *Economist* cannot but be suspected of partiality on the subject, we think that we run no risk in saying that in all its main provisions it will be as acceptable to the public of England as we know it has been to that of Calcutta". In the same number of the *Economist* he published an extract, four columns in length, from my father's speech on

the Budget entitled "Mr. Wilson's Impressions of the Productiveness of India," and in the issue of 7th April Bagehot wrote an article, "Mr. Wilson's Plan for a Paper Currency in India," and another extract from the Budget Speech, "Mr. Wilson on the Amount of the Indian Deficit: its real cause and its true cure". On 4th April Bagehot wrote a long article, "The Income Tax in England and in India," and in the next number an extract from my father's speech on the Currency, delivered at Calcutta, 3rd March, headed, "Mr. Wilson's Remarks on a Gold Currency for India".

"Mr. Wilson's Impressions of the Productiveness of India.

(*The Economist, 31st March*, 1860.)

"Sir, I am fearful of wearying the Council with all these details, but I trust you will bear with me. We have a grave conjunction of affairs to deal with. I think you will already begin to perceive that the evil is deeper and broader than at first it appeared. I think you will begin to see that our task will be heavier, and must extend to great questions of administrative reform, as well as to immediate questions of finance. You will, therefore, I am sure, pardon me if I feel it to be my duty, to the best of my ability, to unbare before you the whole extent of the evils as they present themselves to my mind. Sir, I sincerely trust that in the free observations which I feel compelled in the performance of my duty to make I shall be understood not to reflect unfavourably either upon any individual or upon any class. It is to the system, and the system alone, that I refer. Nay, I will say more. It has been a matter of surprise to me that, with so defective a system, greater evils have not arisen, and that they have not I attribute only to individual zeal and care."

"Mr. Wilson on the Amount of the Indian Deficit: Its Real Cause and Its Real Cure.

(*The Economist, 7th April*, 1860.)

"But, Sir, there is one point upon which I must remark. Until we have one central point of responsible control of Army

finances, as of all others, established, it will be in vain to expect great reduction. Our first course must be to consider carefully what force is sufficient, and not more than sufficient. Our next point must be to have carefully revised estimates, what is here improperly called a Budget System, for military and all other charges, submitted to the Supreme Government annually, as they are in England to Parliament, to sanction only what is necessary, and strictly to keep every province and every department within their limits. Till you have this central financial and revenue control, it is in vain to look for economy;—when you have it, you may safely give much greater executive responsibility to local authority. Sir, in England there is more local government than in any country in the world; but there is no country where the central authority and control of the Government itself is so strong. And, I will add, that it will be in vain that we make improvements and reforms in our finances if these administrative reforms do not take place. You must rely upon a sound system if you will have permanency, and not upon any individual, especially in a country where individuals change so rapidly. Sir, this is nothing new. You have had Finance Commissions over and over again. What have they done? In looking over the archives of the Government of India, I must say, that the minutes left on record of no Governor-General have struck me with more force than those of Lord Ellenborough, and they have induced me to regret that his stay in India had not been longer. That noble Lord is a distinguished member of a great party, always opposed to that with which I have had the honour of acting, and my testimony may therefore be regarded as impartial. Sir, that noble Lord saw and understood the evil of which I speak: he warned the Court of Directors of it. On the 7th of August, 1842, he wrote as follows:—

"'But I cannot hold from the Honourable Court the expression of my decided and long-formed opinion, that whatever diminution may be made by my exertions in the amount of expenditure will only be of a temporary character, without an entire change in the financial department, and some very material modification of the system of carrying on the Govern-

ment. There is now no one officer charged with the duty of viewing the expenditure of the State as a whole, and of considering every proposed or existing item of charge, not by itself only, but with reference to the total charge upon the revenue.

"'Without this concentration of duty and authority in a really responsible officer, I have no hope of giving permanence to the influence of economical principles in the financial administration of India, or of even dealing satisfactorily with the details of expenditure.'"

On 9th May, Walter writes to my sister from London :—

"I have read Sir C. Trevelyan. He says your father will cause a rebellion and that all his laws are unnecessary. Mr. Lowe thinks your father's Budget masterly".

The following letters and extract from the *Economist*, written by Bagehot, explain the disastrous course Sir Charles Trevelyan had thought fit to take respecting the measures of the Central Government of India :—

"Sir Charles Trevelyan's Minute on Mr. Wilson's Budget.

(*The Economist*, 12*th May*, 1860.)

"Sir Charles Trevelyan has entered on the Minutes of the Madras Presidency an elaborate protest against Mr. Wilson's scheme of finance. We greatly lament the publication of this document in India, and are apprehensive of its consequences. We scarcely know how the natives of India are to be governed, if one of their rulers tells them they ought not to be taxed, and the rest of their rulers tell them they *shall* be taxed. But in this country it is very important that we should hear all that can be said against Mr. Wilson's plans as well as all that can be said for them, and Sir Charles Trevelyan's recall does not render it the less necessary that we should examine fully the nature of his objections. Indian finance is a very difficult subject, and though the minute of Sir Charles Trevelyan is rather too like a political pamphlet, we may overlook the defects of its form. We believe the publication of it will tend to strengthen the confidence which is at present felt in the soundness of Mr.

Wilson's plans. On a subject so vast and so little investigated as Indian finance, we could not be sure that there were not some considerations which we had wholly overlooked. We have now heard everything which can be said against Mr. Wilson's scheme by a very competent and seemingly not reluctant critic; if he has discovered no conclusive objection to them, it is very unlikely that any such objection can be found.

"It will be remembered that Mr. Wilson found the deficit in India larger than he expected. It was £9,000,000 last year, and will probably be £6,500,000 this year. To meet this formidable deficit he imposed three taxes—an income tax, a licence tax, and a tobacco tax. Sir Charles's criticism on these taxes is distinct enough. He says, first, that they are unjust as respects a great part of India; secondly, that they are unnecessary; lastly, that they will cause a rebellion. We will take these objections one after another. . . .

"Sir C. Trevelyan thinks there is danger in the course Mr. Wilson has taken. But is there not greater danger in his own course? He has told the natives of Madras that new taxes which are unjust and unnecessary are about to be levied upon them. He has used his authority as local Governor to spread this doctrine. He has hinted that he expects the natives will rebel. Who will be to blame if they do rebel? Surely the ruler who was instructed with an authority over 30,000,000 of people, and who incited them to resistance."

My father writes on 4th July, 1860:—

"DEAR WALTER,

"With regard to the great Madras revolt, I have probably been the calmest spectator either here or at home. From the first I anticipated trouble from him and warned my colleagues of the danger, and our confidential despatch of the 9th of April was written by me in consequence of my apprehensions. But it was all in vain. I expected trouble from him, but never that he would proceed to such extremities.

"As soon as we received his minute our line was taken at once, I saw it would never do to make any reply to him. . . . So we replied to his minute that we must decline any contro-

versy, but that our observations would be made to the Secretary of State. And when I found that he published it even before it was in our hands, I came at once to the conclusion that a firm and decisive front was our policy, and if accompanied by great temperance and moderation, I felt quite confident all would come right. Our despatches to the Secretary of State, up to one which goes by this mail, will, I believe, do more to reveal the real character of Indian Finance than all that has been written the last four years. I hope they will all be presented to Parliament. . . .

"But much as I was prepared for trouble from him, and easily as I took it when it came, I own it was very annoying. Up to the moment there was not a dissenting voice. The measures were received with acclamation. But upon the whole I doubt if the ordeal of discussion to which they have now been exposed will not be without its advantage. I cannot say that I feel less practically secure than I did before. What we have to do is to show no hesitation. Firmness and justice are the only policy for India. No vacillation or you are gone; they like to be governed, and respect an iron hand, if it be but equal and just. I have, I think, more confidence than ever that the taxes will be established and collected, and without disturbance; but the task is still an enormous one.

"However, you have no idea of the increased capacity of the mind for undertaking a special service of this kind when removed to a new scene of action and when one throws off all the cares and engagements, less or more trivial, by which one is surrounded in ordinary life, and throws one's whole soul into such special service, and particularly when one feels assured of having the power to carry it out. I cannot tell you with what ease one determines the largest and gravest question here compared with in England, and I am certain that the more one can exercise real power, there is by far the greater tendency to moderation, care and prudence.

"My colleagues are in every respect what I could wish. Lord Canning has a very competent mind, is open to conviction whatever his views may have been at first. Sir James Outram is a man of the highest honour, with the least self-seeking I

have ever seen in any man ; and Sir B. Frere is one of the most competent, clear-headed, original-thinking, and amiable men I ever knew. We have not had an approach to a disagreeable word since my arrival. If we have differed, friendly discussion has brought it right.

"About the *Economist* and your threatened opposition. I am very glad to see that in every way it holds its own so well. Its writing is certainly as a whole very good and its views sound. One number only I complained of because it consisted in a great measure of an extract from my speech and another from my minute. The more I see of life, and public life, the less I like to see my name prominent in documents. Throughout the late contest I never put anything in the shape of a minute, but always in the form of a despatch from the whole Government. It removes that unhappy personal character to all public proceedings which Trevelyan could not resist. So pray say nothing, and admit nothing that looks like a personal puff or undue pushing forward of me. The way you have treated the Trevelyan matter was fair, reasonable and dignified."

To my eldest sister my father wrote from Barrackpore:—

"19*th July*, 1860.

"It was quite cheerful to have but half a sheet from you by the last Mail. It was very thoughtful to notice my birthday which is more than I did here. I shall be very sorry to deprive you of Julia and Emmy, but still I am selfish enough to hope that circumstances will combine to enable them to come.

"I suppose you have finished your London visit long ere this and are again settled at Clevedon. I hope you enjoyed it. As you say I don't think the Trevelyan affair has done me any harm, but the contrary in England ; but there is no doubt it has given us a great shock among the natives here. Up to the time of those minutes appearing, all Europeans showed a combined and united front, and that had a great effect upon the natives. Had that not been disturbed they would never have ventured even to think of opposition. As it is, that

moral power and restraint has been removed and what was like a charm has been broken. Certainly all that could have been done to counteract the effect has been done. On the instant here, we declared our undiminished determination to proceed with our plans, and the prompt recall of Trevelyan gave all the support to that determination we could have desired. For a bad job the best has been made of it, but the task is heavy and I fear a long one. Write to me frequently, it is a great pleasure to receive your letters. I cannot write often.

"Remember me to the good people at Langport and to Sir Arthur and other old friends.

"With love to you all, believe me,

"Always your affectionate Papa,

"JAMES WILSON."

Walter wrote to my sister from London on 2nd August: "They say Sir Charles Trevelyan is on board the Calcutta mail; that he *would* take command, and lost it".

In his memoir of my father Bagehot writes:—

"The reception of Mr. Wilson's Budget was universally favourable until the publication of the minute of Sir C. Trevelyan, which, as was inevitable, produced a serious reaction. Heavy taxation can never be very pleasant, and in the Presidency of Madras Sir Charles gave the sanction of the Government—of the highest authority the people saw—to the hope that they would not be taxed. The prompt recall of Sir Charles, however, did much to convince the natives of the firm determination of the English Government, and Mr. Wilson hoped that the ordeal of criticism through which his measures had to pass would ultimately be favourable to them. It certainly secured them from the accusation of being prepared in haste, but it purchased this benefit at the loss to the public of much precious time, and to Mr. Wilson of precious health. Of the substance of this minute it is sufficient to say that its fundamental theory, that additional taxation of any sort was unnecessary in India, has scarcely been believed by any one except its author."

From Barrackpore my father writes:—

"*19th July*, 1860.

"My dear Walter,

"I have now got a Military Finance Commission in full swing; a Civil Finance Commission also going. I am re-organising the Finance Pay and Accountant General's Departments in order to get all the advantage of the English System of Estimates, Pay Office and Audit; and this with as little disturbance of existing plans as possible,—the latter is a point I have specially aimed at. On the whole and almost without an exception I have willing allies in all the existing offices. No attempt that I see is anywhere made to thwart or impede.

"You can well understand then, how full my hands are, if to all these you add the new currency arrangements, and you will not then wonder that my health has rendered it necessary to come down here for a day or two to get some fresh air."

The following is the last letter my father wrote to Bagehot. By the same mail—some unconscious prophetic instinct seems to have been at work—he wrote to each of my sisters and myself separately, and in a specially affectionate tone. In all he expressed the desire he felt that my sister Julia and I should be with him.

"My dear Walter,

"We have been in great anxiety for the last fortnight for pending famine in the N.W.P., but at the last moment rain has come and has just saved us. We had already begun our preliminary preparations to meet it. As it is the crops may not be *good* and trade may still be affected by high prices.

"I have had rather a bad attack with the hot damp rain and tremendous work; but I am getting on well, and with my measures, and am the better for having been a week at Barrackpore. Capital accounts from the *Nilgiris*." (My mother had been sent there for reasons of health.) "I hope Julia and Emmy will come. I know nothing yet. My Income Tax is now law and will begin collection on salaries and dividends next week. I managed to get it through the

L.C. without a single division and without giving up one *point* of importance.

"My Licence Bill will be finished in a few days and the Currency Bill has gone as far as I want it till October. I have every reason to be well satisfied and am very happy now that the famine is no longer imminent.

"With love to you all,

"Yours always,

"JAMES WILSON."

On 11th August a calamity in every sense awful had befallen us: yet for four weeks, all unconscious of our loss, we had been passing happy days at The Arches, following our usual pursuits and receiving and answering Indian letters.

In the Diary on 12th September is noted the following: "Walter stayed at home to write for the *Economist*. At one o'clock we saw Papa's death in the *Times*. Julia found it and called me and we both ran to Walter's study."

From my room I had heard a cry and confused sounds of voices and I too ran to Walter's study. The moments there, and those before and after, can never be forgotten. Then came a blank. The clock—all marking of time—stopped. When the hands began to move again they seemed to be moving on another dial.

The following message had been received at the Indian Office on the 11th, and was forwarded to us, but did not reach The Arches till 13th September:—

"ALEXANDRIA, *4th September*.—A message received from Suez sent by order of the Governor-General of India informs me that the Right Hon. James Wilson died on Saturday evening at 7 o'clock. He was interred on Sunday evening. Fifteen minute guns were fired from Fort William.—R. COLQUEHOUN."

Walter Bagehot at once wrote to his father.

"Hour after hour," Mr. Bagehot wrote in answer, "makes me feel more and more sad and my heart aches for you all more than I can describe. The loss of such a parent, and such a man is not easily borne, nor can its extent be at once

comprehended. I think of you as a fellow-sufferer quite with his own children. Your affection for him I know, and his for you was always shown in a way not to be mistaken, and the relation of father and son seemed as complete as it could be. Your loss I cannot attempt to estimate. I will come to you whenever you wish. I feel almost that we have no right to intrude on sorrow so deep and trying."

No words could prove better the modesty and unselfishness of Mr. Bagehot's character. He was willing generously to share with another the tie which existed between himself and the son who had ever been his "greatest treasure". Mr. and Mrs. Bagehot came to The Arches on 17th September. They were the first friends we saw.

Letters of sympathy poured in—mostly addressed to Bagehot—from relations, friends, and my father's political colleagues, one and all expressing the belief that my father's death was a national calamity. On the day we heard of it Mr. Hutton wrote to Bagehot:—

"Is this terrible thing true! I cannot *bear* to think it. I see no telegraphic despatch from India and have very faint hopes it may be false. I feel, and always felt, the warmest regard for Mr. Wilson and am quite stunned." Again he writes: "It struck me with horror to hear that Miss Wilson learned it in that way. It was bad enough for a man friend. God knows how I feel for them all and for you. . . . The whole thing is terrible beyond expression, the more so that I cannot reconcile the idea of death with Mr. Wilson in any way."

Later he writes to Bagehot: "All I implore of you is to let some worthy notice be taken of his life and character in the *Economist*, *and soon*, before the warmth of public sentiment is quite cooled concerning his sad end. If you delay long this will be so in the *outer* world. And I feel very strongly that something is due to him in his own paper, as I am sure you will do.

"That paragraph in the *Times* haunts me still. I don't know that I can explain why the whole thing weighs on me so much like griefs which have cut far deeper. I think you are mistaken in fancying you estimated him intellectually

more highly than I did. My very incapacity to deal with his subjects in the same fashion at all, joined to great enough appreciation of the subjects to make me see how powerfully they were dealt with, made his intellect to me most fascinating. I have often on Friday nights walked down to the very end of Pall Mall with him at near three in the morning, merely to get half an hour's more conversation."

On 17th September Mr. Hutton writes:—

"My dear Bagehot,

"It occurred to me on Friday that you might be able to write a Memoir of Mr. Wilson as a special supplement. It would be *very* good. I did not think it inconsistent with having a briefer notice during the first excitement of public feeling. Greg's gave no idea of the massive simplicity and geniality of his social character and tastes, which in a great financier was exceedingly remarkable. Thorough enjoyment of all the more genial sides of life distinguished him, I should think, from Peel and Lewis and Lord Overstone and all those whose interests came nearest to his."

Mr. Greg wrote to Bagehot on 13th September: "I have scarcely been able to realise the thing. Wilson was the last man in the world with whom one could connect the idea of death. Of all possible calamities it was about the only one I had never dreamed of. I believe in my heart the country could not have sustained a greater loss—and as for his family—!"

Truly the loss was irreparable to us, and during the many years that have passed since that terribly memorable 12th September, 1860, more and more has it been felt to be so. Nevertheless how unutterably sadder and more difficult our lives must have been had not Walter Bagehot been one of us. So completely one with us did we feel him to be, so naturally and unobtrusively did he at once take my father's place in managing all our family affairs and in settling all matters great and small in which our interests were concerned that perhaps, at the time, we hardly realised how much of the great blank he filled, how much more altered our family life would have been without his help.

"Let us pull together in all things," he wrote about that time to one of the family.

The following extracts from letters written to William Halsey in a measure reveal the effect produced on Bagehot by the news of my father's death.

"CLEVEDON,
"*24th September*, 1860.

"MY DEAR WILLIAM,

"As you anticipated, long before your last letter we had the awful intelligence of Mr. Wilson's death. It was in the strictest sense awful news—at least to me. In India where you are daily and hourly familiar with such sudden calamities I have no doubt that you are able to realise the uncertainty of human life, but I never realised it at all. Especially in Mr. Wilson's case. I never really contemplated the contingency of his death. He had so much life, vigour, energy, that it was and even still is—peculiarly difficult to me to connect him with that idea. I have never felt the shock of any event so much. I hope we are well here,—that is as well as we could reasonably expect. Julia saw her father's death in the paper notwithstanding the telegram which you hoped would have prevented it. It was a terrible scene for the time."

A fortnight later Bagehot wrote :—

"I suffered deeply from Mr. Wilson's death—more than I could have supposed possible. I had such extreme pleasure in talking to him on his favourite subjects before he went to India, and since he went away, from writing on the same subjects in the *Economist* where he used to write, that I had a constant habit of referring to his mind and keeping up a sort of mental dialogue with him ; and for several days I was almost bewildered at feeling he was gone. Even now, though I have known of his death almost a fortnight, I am to some extent.[1]

[1] The *Times* correspondent at Calcutta wrote on 8th August, speaking of the circumstances that preceded my father's death. "About six days ago, the Calcutta public was startled by the news that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, after struggling against and vanquishing several minor illnesses, was at last confined to his bed by a very severe attack of dysentery. It is difficult to exaggerate the effect which this intelligence produced on

The *Economist*, bordered with black, appeared on 15th September. Bagehot had decided to write a Memoir as a supplement to a future number, therefore wrote no article himself in that number, but quoted the Leader from the *Times*.

"THE DEATH OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JAMES WILSON.

"The conductors of this journal do not feel that they can at present do more than record this mournful event in the words of others. It has come too suddenly upon them. If they should themselves say anything on the subject, it must be hereafter and deliberately."

(*From the "Times" of 13th September*).

"Scarcely has the grave closed over Sir Henry Ward and all the hopes and aspirations connected with his appointment to the Government of Madras, when we are called upon to record the loss of a man who filled the most prominent situation in India, and to whom we, at least—and, we believe, the great majority of the community in England and in our Eastern Empire,—looked as the regenerator of the finances of India. Mr. Wilson has sunk under the combined effects of a climate to which his constitution was unsuited, and the cares and anxieties of a position of almost unexampled difficulty, labour, and responsibility. He had just life enough given

the public mind. Every one seemed suddenly to appreciate the fact that all chance of financial regeneration was bound up in the life of Mr. Wilson; that the removal of his guiding hand from the rein would be the signal for retrogression into that slough of despond from which we are but now beginning to emerge. It flashed suddenly across the minds of men that Mr. Wilson was not only the directing agent of the new taxes, but the centre and vivifying spirit of all the Committees which are now sitting to bring about administrative reforms. He had made himself a necessity for India; it seemed impossible that, when yet only one of his measures—the Income Tax—had been matured and brought into action, he should be compelled to leave the scene of his labours. These thoughts, combined with the knowledge that his illness had been brought about by intense and unremitting labour in a most trying climate, caused a sensation which, as I said before, it would be difficult to exaggerate. Inquiries were constant, and came from all classes of the Community; even the natives shared in the general feeling of regret."

him to carry through the Indian Legislature his great scheme for remodelling the taxation of the country. The complement to that scheme, the reorganisation of the revenue department, the establishment of an efficient central check on expenditure, —we fear he had not time to realise. With him is gone down to the grave a vast amount of knowledge and experience of the principles and details of all subjects connected with finance, together with an acquaintance with the affairs of India sufficient to make that knowledge thoroughly applicable and available. . . .

"Mr. Wilson suffered severely from the effects of the Indian climate, and was advised to seek for health in a Hill Station, but he felt the arduous nature of the duty he had undertaken too strongly to allow any personal consideration whatever to interfere with it. To that sense of duty he has sacrificed his valuable life.

"We can find men to fill the Government of Madras in whose ability to discharge its duties with prudence and vigour we can feel every confidence, but we look in vain for the man whom we should place in the situation which by the consent of all Mr. Wilson was thoroughly competent to fill. . . . No worthier panegyric can be passed on the public servant we have lost than this,—that he has gone, and left no successor."

Sir Charles Wood kindly forwarded to us a private letter Lord Canning had written him, describing the last interview he had with my father.

"The sad news of poor Wilson's death will have reached you by telegraph. It was rather sudden at the end, for he rallied a little after I closed my last letter (9th August), and some about him still had hope, but on the following day he sank rapidly and all was over. I saw him on the 9th. It appeared to me then that death was in his face; but he was not very weak. He talked chiefly about some private arrangements, and then a little about public matters—the Currency Bill, the Military Finance Committee, etc. I was by his bedside for a quarter of an hour, at the end of which he got exhausted. He said he knew how it must end, and I could say no more in dispute of this, than that his Doctor had told

me in the morning that a return of strength might show itself in the course of the next two days, and that if so, his life might still be safe. He was stronger the next day, but it was only for a few hours. A bad night followed and on the 11th he died.

"I was much struck by the tone in which he spoke of public matters—not a word of self—or of his own name or share in the work in hand, and yet with great hopefulness of the success of most of the machinery which he has set at work. It was very touching."

The official announcement of my father's death was also forwarded to us.

"To the Right Honourable Sir Charles Wood, Bart., G.C.B., Secretary of State for India.

"Sir, the painful task is imposed upon us of announcing to Her Majesty's Government the death of our colleague, the Right Honourable James Wilson.

"2. This lamentable event took place on the evening of Saturday, the 11th, after an illness of a few days.

"3. We enclose a copy of the notification by which we yesterday communicated the mournful intelligence to the public. The funeral took place at the time mentioned in the notification; and the great respect in which our lamented colleague was held was evinced by a very large attendance of the general community, in addition to the public officers, civil and military.

"4. We are unable adequately to express our sense of the great loss which the public interests have sustained in Mr. Wilson's death. We do not doubt, however, that this will be as fully appreciated by Her Majesty's Government as it is by ourselves, and as we have every reason to believe it will be by the community generally throughout India.

"5. But we should not satisfy our feelings in communicating this sad occurrence to Her Majesty's Government, if we did not state our belief that the fatal disease which has removed Mr. Wilson from amongst us was in a degree the consequence of his laborious application to the duties of his

high position, and of his conscientious determination not to cease from the prosecution of the important measures of which he had charge until their success was ensured. Actuated by a self-denying devotion to the objects for which he came out to this country, Mr. Wilson continued to labour indefatigably long after the general state of his health had become such as to cause anxiety to the physician who attended him, and it was within a few days only after the Income Tax had become law, and when, at the earnest request of his medical adviser, he was preparing to remove from Calcutta for the remainder of the rainy season, that he was seized with the illness that has carried him off.

"6. It is our sincere conviction that this eminent public servant sacrificed his life in the discharge of his duty.

"We have, etc.

"CANNING.
"H. B. E. FRERE.
"C. BEADON.

"FORT WILLIAM,
"13*th August*, 1860."

Bagehot wrote in the Memoir: "The mourning in Calcutta was more universal than had ever been remembered. He had not been long in India, but while he had been there he filled a conspicuous and great part: he had done so much that there were necessarily doubts in the minds of some as to the expediency of part of it. No such doubts, however, were thought of now. 'That he should have come out to die here!'—'That he should have left a great English career for this!' were the phrases in every one's mouth. The funeral was the largest ever known in Calcutta. It was attended by almost the whole population, from the Governor-General downwards, and not a single voice, on any ground whatever, dissented from the general grief."

In the pages of the *Economist* of 20th October Bagehot inserted the tribute Sir Bartle Frere paid my father in a speech delivered to the Legislative Council at Calcutta:—

"It had pleased Providence to take him from among us,

and he [Sir Bartle Frere] believed there was not throughout India a single right-minded Englishman who did not feel his death as a personal as well as a national loss. He was sure that, when the intelligence of this melancholy event reached England, Mr. Wilson's loss would be mourned in the same manner as was that of Neil, of Havelock, of Nicholson, and of Peel. What Mr. Wilson's loss would be to the Government, those only who had laboured with him could understand. . . .

"It was not only that we had experience of his large statesman-like views and great abilities in the transaction of every branch of public business, but we felt the same confidence in his opinions on every subject connected with finance which was accorded to him by men of every party at home. He was a master in his craft, and no other man could possibly succeed in gaining that amount of public confidence for his judgment on all financial matters which Mr. Wilson so justly possessed."

In Sir Richard Temple's record of his Indian experiences[1] is found a full account of my father's work in India. He was on my father's personal staff in addition to being the ordinary financial secretariat of the Government.

"In February, 1860, Mr. Wilson produced his financial Budget before the Legislative Council at Calcutta, carefully explaining that his proposals had the concurrence of his colleagues and the approval of Lord Canning. His speech on that occasion was the most able and eloquent statement that had ever up to that time been made orally in India. Remarkable minutes and reports had been frequent in India, but not speeches; and since that day the proceedings of the Indian Legislature have often been animated by oratory. But the novelty of Wilson's oratorical effort, enlivening so grave a subject as finance, charmed as well as astonished both those who heard the statement and those who read the *verbatim* report of it. The warmth, confidence, and enthusiasm of his words, also the solidity of his arguments founded on a financial ex-

[1] *Men and Events of My Time in India*, by Sir Richard Temple, Bart., G.C.S.I., C.I.E., D.C.L., late Finance Minister of India; Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and Governor of Bombay.

perience far larger than that possessed by any one in India seemed to take, as it were, the public mind by storm. All men believed that the State, having passed successfully through its political and military trials, was drifting into another danger, which, if less pressing, was more abiding, namely, that of certain disorder and possible disaster financially. As matters grew worse a state of urgency appeared to be approaching; the time was full, and, in public estimation, here was Wilson, the man to cope with it. . . .

"Men felt that some remedy must be applied, and were prepared to support the man who proposed a definite policy. The European members of the community both official and non-official were, indeed, jealous of being 'taxed without representation,' that is, taxed under a Government which had no representative institutions. Still they loyally accepted a necessity which had been proved to their satisfaction, and patriotically acquiesced in the sacrifices demanded from them. The Anglo-Indian newspaper Press strongly and cordially supported the Budget. The natives generally were silent; and the organs of native opinion seemed to yield to the current of approbation which had set in.

"Thus it happened that Wilson was at the outset greeted with a chorus of public approval. Though he relied much on the spirit and patriotism of his countrymen in India, he was agreeably surprised at the more than favourable reception accorded to his Budget statement. And as congratulations continued to pour in from many quarters, he used to declare himself to be 'the most fortunate of tax-gatherers'. To complete his contentment, he received friendly support from the then Secretary of State, Sir Charles Wood (afterwards Lord Halifax).

"Soon, however, clouds began to rise on this clear horizon, as was indeed to be expected by all who knew the changeableness of the 'popularis aura'. It transpired that one important functionary, Sir Charles Trevelyan, Governor of Madras, disapproved the Budget, describing its main provisions as 'three tremendous taxes'. He was then in full swing of his administration, and was deemed to be one of the most competent

and energetic Governors that had ever ruled over the Madras Presidency. His unfavourable view in respect to the Budget, besides exercising great influence with his colleagues at Madras and his principal officers, affected public opinion throughout Southern India. He then allowed the local newspapers to publish the protest which he had deemed it his duty to record against the proposed taxation. This publication caused excitement at Calcutta and other centres of opinion in India, and was thought to constitute an official collision between the Government of Madras and the Supreme Government. Lord Canning, who was then absent in Northern India, returned to Calcutta, in order that he might better arrange measures for vindicating his authority. Sir Charles Trevelyan shortly left Madras, having been recalled by the Government in England. . . ."

Later my father "produced," writes Sir R. Temple, "before the Legislative Council his measure for a Government paper currency, to which great importance was attached. His speech on that occasion was so lucid as to invest with much interest a subject not ordinarily attractive. Being the first statement of that kind made in India, it was received with admiring attention. . . ."

Bagehot had written in the *Economist*, 25th February, 1860: "There is no country in which the admitted advantages of a paper currency would be of so great importance as in India. In that country itself enormous quantities of silver are continually being transferred from one place to another, both for the purposes of trade and for the purposes of revenue. This not only entails upon India a vast expense, and absorbs much capital which it would be more wise to employ productively, but it requires that the Government shall keep continually at hand considerable bodies of troops for the purpose of protecting the remittance of its money from one part of the country to another.

"It is now generally, though not universally, agreed that, in conformity with the recommendation of Mr. Wilson, the paper currency which is to be issued in India should be a Government currency both in reality and name. We showed a short

time since that on every account it was most advisable that this course should be adopted."

". . . Mr. Wilson," Sir Richard Temple continues, " probably learnt more of the country in a very short time than any person who ever landed on its shores; and his general information extended daily. His hopes of success in his financial policy were as high as his sense of the gravity and difficulty of his task. As weeks and months wore on, bringing with them their load of toil, trouble and anxiety, his character showed itself in a stronger light. Despite the depression from great heat, to which he had not been accustomed, his spirits were buoyant, and disposition elastic, while his bearing was genial and animated. His temper, though not destitute of warmth and impetuosity in pursuit of great objects, was yet ready and equable under disappointments. Though desirous of entering into the views of his opponents, he was yet very self-reliant, never doubting that if his plans were defeated for a time he would surely rectify them, and that they would come right in the end if only his eye should be upon them and his hand remain at the helm. He kept before his imagination a goal from which his thoughts were never diverted; if he could not win it at once he would be content with some progress, and pause with the full intention of starting again some day from the point where he had then stopped. His mind was fertile in expedients and whenever obstacles threatened him with failure he would forthwith contrive remedies in the conviction that his policy was good for the public interests and must ultimately prevail.

" At first his illness excited no alarm in his family or among the public, and the general impression regarding his vigour and vitality remained undisturbed. He continued to read official papers, giving general attention to public affairs without performing much actual business. But he was soon obliged to accede to the request of his physician, Dr. Alexander Macrae, of Calcutta, that he should call in a second medical adviser, and cease reading or thinking; then warnings of danger began to be whispered abroad. As the dysentery developed more and more of its formidable symptoms day

after day, he asked for a categorical statement of his condition from Dr. Macrae, in whose judgment and devotion he placed much confidence. The physician's reply, without absolutely shutting out hope, led him to prepare for a speedy end. He immediately sent to Lord Canning, to come for a last interview. During that conversation he commended the services of several who had worked with him, and mentioned some arrangements he had intended to propose, evincing thoughtfulness for others to the last. His countenance had become emaciated in the extreme ; he looked as if he had been starved to death by the illness, as Lord Canning thus described his aspect to me afterwards. He then wrote a letter to his wife in the Nilgiri Hills, also dictated various messages on public and private affairs with steady coolness and entire self-possession. A few hours later, he sank under dysentery in its most fatal form on the evening of Saturday, 11th August. The following evening he was buried in the principal cemetery of Calcutta, and as his coffin was lowered, there stood around his grave one of the most important and varied assemblages that had ever been seen in that place—an assemblage comprising representatives of every class of the European community, whether official or non-official. The strings of carriages, carrying sorrowful spectators, covered more than two miles of the road leading to the burial-ground. That Sabbath was a day of mourning, and in every church of the city allusion was made from the pulpit to the solemn lesson conveyed to the community by the sudden demise of one among the foremost citizens of the Empire.

" On a retrospect of that stirring and eventful time, the mind at first hardly realises that these broadly laid plans embracing, with a comprehensive policy, vast affairs and varied subjects, were all crowded by Wilson into the brief space of eight months. A review of these proceedings will help us to imagine what great things a man, who did so much in a few months, would have accomplished had he been spared for a few years. Between December and July he introduced for the first time in India a financial Budget framed upon the English model —inspired the public mind with fresh confidence—brought

together the threads of finance which had been broken and scattered by a military and political convulsion—proposed to the legislature three new taxes and carried one of them, the income-tax, through several stages in the Legislative Council —devised a scheme for the Government paper currency—stimulated the operations of the Military Finance Commission over the entire range of army expenditure for both the European and Native forces—procured the appointment of a commission to review the numerous branches of civil expenditure—caused arrangements to be begun for re-organising the whole police of the Empire—reviewed the existing system of audit and account—besides discharging the multifarious duties devolving on a finance minister and a member of the general Government. All this was compassed by him immediately on landing in an utterly strange country amidst an alien people, and further was carried on with unabated vigour despite the depression caused by a tropical climate."

Bagehot published in the *Economist*, 18th August, 1860, an important minute, written by Sir Bartle Frere, refuting statements which had been made to the effect that my father's scheme of taxation was that of one who was trying to force purely English measures on to a people to whom they were unsuited.

"INDIAN FINANCE.

"Minute by the Hon. Sir H. B. E. Frere, dated 24th April, 1860, showing that the taxes now proposed to be levied in India are in accordance with the practice of the natives themselves:—

"There is one point in the objections which have been raised to Mr. Wilson's financial measures which it seems to me has been hardly sufficiently noticed, and which, indeed, I should scarcely have thought, required elaborate refutation, had it not been taken up by the press in some parts of India, and by the British Indian (Zemindars') Association in the petition which was presented to the Legislative Council on Saturday last, and urged in terms so plausible as to mislead all but those who are intimately acquainted with native modes of taxation.

"I allude to the assertion that Mr. Wilson's scheme is entirely 'on the English model'; that 'the taxes he proposes are utterly unsuited to India'; that 'his plan embraces the introduction into India of direct taxation' (as if it were a perfect novelty) 'calculated to arouse all the natives' latent feelings of opposition'. That it is, in fact, such a plan as a man acquainted only with England and English modes of taxation would devise, and which anyone acquainted with India and Indian modes of taxation would reject as impossible or dangerous.

"But how stands the fact? It would be far nearer the truth to say the taxes proposed by Mr. Wilson are in principle, and in most of their details, similar to taxes which are almost universal throughout all native States in India, which date from the earliest periods of Indian history, which have never been given up to any considerable extent by any Indian Government till we conquered the country, and that the scheme Mr. Wilson has devised for restoring the equilibrium of our finances is precisely such as would commend itself to the judgment of any experienced native financier. No notice is taken of the fact that, during the present discussion, no scheme of fresh taxation has hitherto been propounded by anyone, native or European, which would bear a moment's examination, which has not included some form of direct taxation, all more or less partial, inadequate to our wants, or otherwise more objectionable than that selected by Mr. Wilson—but all direct taxes, and generally in some form, more or less cumbersome, taxes on incomes—such taxes, in fact, being, from the earliest times, component parts of all native schemes of finance.

"It seems to be forgotten that up to 1834-6, taxes on incomes, trades, and professions were levied almost universally throughout British India under various names, and that they were then abolished in parts of Bengal and throughout the North-Western Provinces and Bombay, not because they were in theory bad taxes, but because they were so unfairly assessed and unequally levied, that it was difficult to reform them in their then existing shape. Many able men then advocated their retention, after a thorough reform; but they were not then needed. . . .

"Altogether, I doubt whether there is any part of India where an income tax, and taxes on arts, trades, and professions, are as much a novelty as the income tax was in England when revised by Sir Robert Peel; certainly there is none where such taxes are as new to the people as the income tax was in England, when first proposed by Mr. Pitt as a regular part of his financial system.

"(Signed) H. B. E. FRERE.

"*24th April*, 1860."

On 20th October, the anniversary of my father's leaving England for India, Walter met my mother and my sister Matilda (Mrs. Horan) at Southampton on their return from India and brought them to The Arches.

He was then writing the memoir of my father which appeared as a supplement to the *Economist* on 17th November, 1860. He sent the proofs to Mr. Arbuthnot of the Treasury who wrote in reply:—

"TREASURY,
"*1st December*, 1860.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have read very carefully the passages in your memoir of Mr. Wilson which relate to his work in the Treasury, and I see nothing whatever that requires correction. I think however that they are susceptible of some addition. You might with justice to his memory refer to the very cordial manner in which he discussed subjects with those who acted under him, listened to their objections or suggestions, and often governed himself by them.

"While he worked as no other Secretary of the Treasury ever worked, so far from depressing others, he encouraged their exertions, co-operated with them, and was always ready to bear hearty testimony to the merits of deserving Officers. For myself, it would be very gratifying to me if you made some allusion to the generous spirit in which he forgot temporary animosities which are too apt to arise amongst earnest men who differ in opinion, and which spirit prevented him from allowing them to operate to the prejudice of the public service.

"He was eminently tolerant. In my own case, after

differences which were enough to ruffle the temper of any man, he soon allowed all personal feeling to subside, and it has been a great consolation to me to reflect that, previous to his departure for India, I had the opportunity of confidential and unreserved communication with him on matters of great public interest, and that we parted with as much cordiality as if there had been no unpleasant passages between us. I had several letters from him from India written in the same spirit, and in the last which I received from him, he enquired about several Officers of this Department, with whom he had been thrown principally in contact, expressing great interest in matters affecting their prospects of advancement.

"Yours very truly,

"G. ARBUTHNOT.

"W. BAGEHOT, ESQ."

Lord Grey wrote a long letter to Bagehot which began:—

"HOWICK, ALNWICK,
"*24th November*, 1860.

"DEAR SIR,

"I cannot forbear writing to say with how much interest I read your memoir of Mr. Wilson in the supplement to last week's *Economist*.

"Having had the pleasure of knowing him very well, and the advantage of much valuable assistance and advice from him when I was in office, I can bear testimony to the strict accuracy of all you say with regard to his great ability in public affairs and especially with reference to all questions of commerce and finance. His death is indeed a great calamity to the nation, and still more so to India, and though I trust the great measures he had begun there had made so much progress that the sound principles on which they rest may ensure their success, it is impossible not to feel that the probability of this is greatly diminished by their execution being no longer guided by his energy and judgment. . . ."

In the grave pages of the *Economist* Bagehot dwelt almost exclusively in this memoir on the serious side of his subject. He fully appreciated nevertheless the value of my father's

personality, the charm of which lay much in the keen sympathy he felt for various interests outside his own line of work. As Mr. Hutton notes he had "thorough enjoyment of all the more genial sides of life". He greatly enjoyed the beauty of nature, and cared much for art and music.

A very happy description of the combination in my father of gravity and vivacity is given in Sir Richard Temple's *Men and Events of my Time in India.* Working with and under my father, he was daily brought into contact with him. Among his many attainments Sir Richard Temple was a good artist, and he recognised in my father's temperament those sensibilities which were in sympathy with the artistic side of his own. He writes: "He (my father) had a keen perception of every object that met his view, a habit of casting observant looks in all directions, and an extraordinarily retentive memory of what he saw, heard, or read. His manner and conversation, though grave while he was intent on work, were bright and vivacious in society. He delighted in India as a country, and regarded her resources with hopeful interest, her people with sympathy, her scenery with admiration, her antiquities with curiosity. Nothing, he said, could be imagined more intensely interesting than India; with the ancient cities, the relics of decayed dynasties, the thronging population, the bustle of trade at every corner, the expansive plains bounded by alpine ranges affording a climate for new varieties of production, the large rivers, the magnificent canals irrigating the country, the careful agriculture with cultivation up to the roadside, the thrifty and economical habits of the people bent on active and profitable pursuits. These descriptive expressions are his own, being taken straight from his sayings and writings. It was instructive as well as amusing to accompany him in his walks during the early morning hours amidst the suburbs of Calcutta. He would observe every Native garden that we passed, talking about the natural habitat, culture and uses of the trees or plants. He would often stop at the wayside booth or shops, discussing the manufacture, prices and style of the wares. He would note the carts, drawn by bullocks and laden with produce, on their way to the capital, also the men and women

carrying head-loads of articles to market. Then he would ever and anon exclaim that the country seemed bursting, as it were, with vitality and industry. The fairs which were held almost daily in various places, and more especially the central market of Calcutta, offered to him an extensive scope for economic reflection. He would watch the piece-goods and fancy-wares from Europe, the Oriental stuffs made in far-off cities, the flowers and vegetables brought by railway from gardens distant hundreds of miles, the game snared or shot in forests and marshes. He regarded all these goods, indeed, with the eye of an economist, in reference to their uses, but having a lively imagination he recognised their beauty also. If a thing seemed beautiful he felt all the more zealous in promoting its usefulness ; if a thing was useful he appreciated it the better from its being beautiful also. Having been from the first imbued with the principles of unrestricted freedom in trade, he loved to speculate upon the moral advantages arising from the interchange of produce, which were in their way as great as the material advantages. Trade, he would say, is a great agency for securing peace and charity among men in all parts of the earth, enlarging the minds of diverse nations, raising their thoughts beyond petty jealousy, softening their mutual animosities, and uniting them by the bonds of good-will and of common interest. . . . Wilson's intellect was essentially methodical in its habits, ever searching for first principles and fundamental axioms, and then applying them to practice and to actual circumstances. . . . He was eminently practical. His principles lay deep in his mind, but in respect to practice he was ever studying the variety of circumstances, keeping his imagination open for the reception of the new ideas to be derived from the facts as recently learnt, and from the phenomena as freshly perceived. He was most anxious to understand India not as she had been supposed to be, or as she ought to have become, but as she actually was. While keeping in recollection the broad traits of human nature, as common to mankind in all times and places, he was especially desirous to realise to himself the idiosyncrasies, aptitudes and tendencies—even the prejudices—of the Natives. Although

the people had to be led gently towards the paths of economic science, yet he wished to show the tenderest consideration towards the thoughts and sentiments springing from their historical antecedents. He hoped also to evince that moderation and self-restraint which befitted the peculiar position of the British as foreign masters of an eastern empire.

"Such in brief was Wilson, the first scientific economist who had ever visited India. . . ."

And, it may be added, such was the nature which had a more direct influence on Bagehot than had any other after his mind became matured. Intimate contact with my father established a harmony between Bagehot's active and his intellectual impulses. This led to trains of thought which later found expression in his three complete works—*The English Constitution*, *Lombard Street*, *Physics and Politics*, and the *Economic Studies* left unfinished when he died.

Shortly after my father's death the English Government approached Bagehot on the question as to whether he would accept the post my father had filled in India. He at once declined, stating that family reasons made it impossible for him to leave England. Under no circumstances would Bagehot have left his father to bear the home trouble without his help. As is well known, Mr. Samuel Laing was then appointed as my father's successor but resigned the post in 1862. Sir C. Wood then appointed Sir Charles Trevelyan. In the *Economist* of 8th November, 1862, Bagehot wrote a long article, of which the following are the first passages:—

"Sir C. Trevelyan as Finance Minister for India.

"The appointment of Sir C. Trevelyan as Finance Minister of India must awaken recollections in the face of which the conductors of this journal cannot profess to be impartial. They have weighed well whether on such a subject it would be advisable for them to say anything, but they think that it would be best for them to say a few words.

"There is but little need to refer to the publication by Sir Charles Trevelyan of the now celebrated Madras despatches, and his consequent recall by the Secretary of State for India.

The Right Hon.ble James Wilson, M.P.
1859
Presented to Mrs Wilson by The Royal Academy of Scotland

He was then recalled, not for erroneous doctrines in finance, not for a single doctrine which he avowed, or a single doctrine which he combated, but for palpable and plain insubordination. There is, and must be, a supreme Government in India; Mr. Wilson was for the time the authorised and recognised organ of that Government. Sir Charles Trevelyan resisted that Government, and revolted against the policy of Mr. Wilson, and he has paid the inevitable penalty.

"The publication of the Madras despatches was a monstrous act of misjudgment and insubordination, but it was only an aggravated outbreak of an inherent disposition. Sir Charles Trevelyan has many eminent qualities—great acuteness, great industry, an ardent though ill-regulated public zeal—but he never was a safe man; he never had a sound and simple judgment; from vanity or from some better motive, he has never been very willing to confine himself to his proper sphere, especially when it was a subordinate one. These are the very opposite qualities to those which India requires in the situation to which he has been appointed. . . ."

Referring to this article Bagehot received the following letter from Sir Charles Wood :—

"SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA IN COUNCIL.

"INDIA OFFICE,
"*28th November*, 1862.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have been intending to write to you for a long time, ever since indeed I determined to send Sir C. Trevelyan to India.

"You naturally might view the appointment with a critical eye, and I have not a word to say against the criticism in the *Economist* on the subject. I believe, however, that you will find that he will be a much more faithful successor in Mr. Wilson's steps than Mr. Laing. He will maintain the Income Tax according to Wilson's avowed intention for the five years and fully carry out his plans for the management of the currency, as far as is possible after the derangement made in them of late. He is fully aware of the error which he committed and

will, I believe, make an admirable public servant at Calcutta. He is thoroughly imbued with what were Wilson's notions, that a financier to make great plans and long speeches is not what is now needed, but a practical man of business to reduce and keep down expenditure.

"I think you will be pleased to hear this. He erred and has paid dearly for his error, though not more dearly than was fitting, and I hope we shall get good service out of him yet.

"Yours truly,
"C. WOOD.

"W. BAGEHOT, ESQ."

In answer to this letter Bagehot wrote:—

"I am very much obliged to you for your kind note of yesterday.

"It was impossible that Mr. Wilson's wife and relations could hear of Sir C. Trevelyan's appointment without feeling some pain, but this the information contained in your note must very much diminish.

"It would be untrue to say that I feel no anxiety as to Sir C. Trevelyan's future course in India for he is undeniably a little *erratic;* but nothing can be more satisfactory than his present opinions, and in every way I am sure he will be better than Mr. Laing."

Sir Charles Wood answered this note enclosing one from Sir Charles Trevelyan to him.

"INDIA OFFICE, BELGRAVE SQUARE,
"*2nd December*, 1862.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Your letter was written in so kind a spirit that I could not resist sending it to Trevelyan, and I now enclose his answer, which I am sure will be gratifying to all Mr. Wilson's friends and relatives.

"They were not men to differ except on public grounds, honourable alike to both, and there was, and is, nothing petty or crooked in either of them.

"Yours truly,
"C. WOOD."

"DEAR WOOD,

"I am glad you sent me Mr. Bagehot's note. I have never yielded to the weakness of under-rating my predecessor or successor, and of Wilson I can only think and speak as of a very able, indefatigable public servant, who did much for his country while he lived, and ended by sacrificing his life for it, after he had laid the foundation of the new system of Indian Finance which I hope to finish. My personal relations with Wilson while we were in India together were perfectly friendly, and I regret that I did not preserve a letter which he wrote me after my recall reminding me that our difference had been entirely public and expressing his regret that India was to lose my services, and warmly thanking me for some attentions I had been able to pay to his family. Whatever faults I may have, to do injustice to my predecessor is not one of them, and in this case the circumstances are such as would induce a man from mere self-interest to pretend a kindness which he did not feel.

"Sincerely yours,

"C. TREVELYAN.

"GROSVENOR CRESCENT."

In the *Economist* of 6th June, 1863, Bagehot writes: "The Budget of Sir C. Trevelyan has now been received in this country. *From actual facts* we are now justified in saying that the *Indian deficit is extinguished*." After enumerating other sources of revenue, Bagehot writes: "Lastly, there has been the produce of between £1,500,000 and £2,000,000 of Mr. Wilson's income tax. Such has been the final extinction of the deficit which Mr. Wilson went out to cure. It will be universally admitted that by the impetus which he gave to the career of improvement, by the military commission which he created, and which really effected the enormous economy which we have mentioned, by the additional taxation he imposed, and by the general vigour which, even in a short time, his imperturbable will imparted to all the financial measures of Government, he essentially contributed to the great result which has now indisputably been attained."

CHAPTER XII.

"THE ECONOMIST"

BAGEHOT was sworn in as Justice of the Peace for the County of Somerset at the Epiphany Session held at Taunton, and on 18th January, 1861, he attended Petty Sessions for the first time with Sir Arthur Elton. They drove together to Long Asheton, where Petty Sessions were held.

My father had appointed his brothers and Bagehot his executors. It was settled that Bagehot should undertake the Directorship of the *Economist*, to continue, in fact, to hold the same position my father gave him when he left for India. He was beginning to feel that the daily railway journeys were exhausting, and determined that it would be better for him and my sister to live in London. About this time Lord Ellenborough wrote to my mother offering to relinquish his lease of 12 Upper Belgrave Street which he had taken for five years, the term of my father's Indian appointment. It was decided that she should accept this kind offer, and that the Bagehots should make their London home with us in Upper Belgrave Street. A change was made in Bagehot's work in Stuckey's Bank. He resigned the local management of the branch in Bristol and undertook to supervise the work of the Bank in London.

A change also was made in the staff of the *Economist*. Mr. Meredith Townsend, who was conducting the *Friend of India* in 1859, had obtained an introduction to my father while he was in Calcutta. Mr. Townsend wished to leave India and start a newspaper in England. My father advised him to obtain, if posible, the aid of Mr. Hutton. Much as my father and Bagehot valued Mr. Hutton, they agreed in thinking that his particular gifts would work better on the staff of a newspaper such as Mr. Townsend wished to start, than on that of the *Economist*. On arriving in England Mr.

Townsend found that the *Spectator* was in the market. Following my father's advice he made the acquaintance of Mr. Hutton, and together, as co-proprietors and co-editors, they revived the *Spectator*. The complete success of this venture is now well known.

Bagehot did not replace Mr. Hutton but undertook the work of editing as well as directing the *Economist* himself. By living in London he found this was possible, at all events, for the time being. The uprooting from The Arches took place in May, 1861.

In the July number of the *National Review*, 1861, appeared Bagehot's essay on William Pitt, the text being "Life of the Right Hon. William Pitt by Earl Stanhope, author of the History of England from the Peace of Utrecht". It was a subject after his own heart. Pitt's commanding character, his courage, his fortitude, his singular good fortune, his unrivalled opportunities while he still possessed the fervour of youth, all appealed to Bagehot's imagination. But perhaps what fascinated him most were certain characteristics in Pitt which cannot fail to remind those intimate with Bagehot of himself. "He (Pitt) was preserved," Bagehot writes, "from the characteristic degradation of well-intentioned and erudite youth by two great counteracting influences—a strong sense of humour and a genuine interest in great subjects. His sense of fun was, indeed, disguised from the vulgar by a rigid mask of grave dignity; but in private it was his strongest characteristic. 'Don't tell me,' he is said to have remarked, 'of a man's being able to talk sense; everyone can talk sense; can he talk nonsense?' And Mr. Wilberforce, the most cheerful of human beings, who had seen the most amusing society of his generation, always declared that Pitt's wit was the best which he had ever known. And it was likely to be; humour gains much by constant suppression, and at no time of life was Pitt ever wanting in dexterous words. No man who really cares for great things, and who sees the laughable side of little things, ever becomes a 'prig'." Again, how much of the following description of Pitt suggests Bagehot's own moods. "In all descriptions of Pitt's appearance in the House of Commons, a

certain aloofness fills an odd space. He is a 'thing apart,' different somehow from other members. Pitt was spare, dignified, and reserved. When he entered the House, he walked to the place of the Premier, without looking to the right or to the left, and he sat at the same place. He was ready to discuss important business with all proper persons, upon all necessary occasions, but he was not ready to discuss business unnecessarily with anyone, nor did he discuss anything but business with any save a few intimate friends, with whom his reserve at once vanished, and his wit and humour at once expanded, and his genuine interest in all really great subjects was at once displayed. In a popular assembly this sort of reserve, rightly manipulated, is a power. It is analogous to the manner which the accomplished author of *Eothen* recommends in dealing with Orientals: 'it excites terror and inspires respect'. A recent book of memoirs illustrates it. During Addington's administration, a certain rather obscure 'Mr. G.' was made a privy councillor; and the question was raised in Pitt's presence as to the mode in which he could have obtained that honour. Someone said, 'I suppose he was always talking to the Premier and bothering him'. Mr. Pitt quietly observed, 'In my time I would much rather have made him a Privy Councillor *than have spoken to him*'." (In a letter to one of his sisters-in-law, Bagehot writes: "It is inconceivable to me to like to see many people and even to speak to them. Every new person you know is an intellectual burden because you may see them again, and must be able to recognise and willing to converse with them.") "It is easy to conceive the mental exhaustion which this well-managed reserve spared him, the number of trivial conversations which it economised, the number of imperfect ambitions which it quelled before they were uttered. An ordinary man could not, of course, make use of it. But Pitt at the earliest period imparted to the House of Commons the two most important convictions for a member in his position: he convinced them that he would not be the king's creature, and that he desired no pecuniary profit for himself. As he despised royal favour, and despised real money, the House of Commons thought he might well despise them."

Lord Ellenborough did not at once find another London house to suit him, therefore our return to Upper Belgrave Street was delayed till the winter of 1861. Meanwhile my mother and the Bagehots took a house in Ennismore Gardens —belonging to a very great friend and admirer of my father's, Mr. Bonamy Price, Professor of Political Economy at Oxford. There Madame Mohl spent most days with us. She was writing the Life of Madame Récamier and sought my sister Julia's aid in correcting her proofs.

Bagehot was then writing the article on "The American Constitution" for the *National Review*, suggested by stirring events then happening in America. During that year he wrote no less than thirty-one articles in the *Economist* on the Civil War, and the main side issues resulting from it.

In the early days of August the death occurred of Lord Herbert of Lee, and a tribute to him by Bagehot appeared in the *Economist*. "Lord Herbert's untimely death is one of those rare calamities," he writes, "which all men of all parties unite not only in deploring as a public loss, but in feeling as a personal grief. We cannot say 'we could have better spared a better man,'—for among our statesmen no better man was to be found; but assuredly we could have better spared a cleverer man, — and many cleverer undoubtedly exist. But Lord Herbert was an unique man; and unique men are of all the most difficult to replace. He was also an unstained and undamaged man—and such can seldom be met with among politicians who for years have taken a prominent part in the struggles of the Parliamentary arena or the toils of official life, and are perhaps scarcer than ever now. He was in the prime of his mature strength; he had the highest position in the State in almost certain prospect; and, what was more important still, he had great services yet to render to his country. He did much, but has left his special work undone. He was disinterested and sincere; he was not specially ambitious of distinction or of power; he was fortunate in that his position as to rank and wealth left him nothing to desire; more fortunate still in that this happy independence was in him combined with a public courage which is not

always its concomitant. From his freedom, from his honesty, from his earnestness, he drew that proper spirit—half the inheritance of the English gentleman, half the endowment of the moral and religious thinker—which refused to fall in with popular prejudice or to bow to popular clamour. He sympathised largely and warmly with the people; he served them zealously and faithfully; but never for a moment would he either flatter them or yield to them. On the question of Reform his views were liberal as well as moderate; he repeated no party Shibboleth; he really studied the subject, and was one of the few public men who showed himself a willing and intelligent recipient of new ideas. Power, in his estimation, was too sacred a trust to be either neglected or abused: he *could* not, knowingly, have made a bad appointment; he could not have deliberately foisted into the public service an incompetent relative or friend; he could not, at the head of a great department, have suffered recognised abuses to survive, if a way of reforming them could be devised. He was above everything a man *to confide in;* you always knew where to find him; he had courage, but it was not aggressive; he had zeal, but it was according to knowledge. He has left no similitude behind him."

The great event of the winter of 1861 was the death of the Prince Consort. Bagehot published a short article in the *Economist* of 21st December on this grave national calamity. "If our loss," he wrote, "is not—as has been extravagantly said—the greatest which the English nation could have sustained, it is among the most irreparable. . . . The royal family of last week is still (and without change) the royal family of to-day; but the father of that family is removed. For such a loss there is not, in this world, any adequate resource or any complete compensation. In no rank of life can anyone else be to the widow and children what the deceased father and husband would have been. In the Court as in the cottage, such loss must not only be grief now, but perplexity, trouble, and perhaps mistake hereafter. The present generation, at least the younger part of it, have lost the idea that the Court is a serious matter. Everything for twenty years has seemed

to go so easily and so well, that it has seemed to go by itself. There is no such thing in this world. Everything requires anxiety, and reflection, and patience. And the function of the Court, though we easily forget it when it is well performed, keeps itself much in our remembrance when it is ill-performed. The Crown is of singular importance in a divided and contentious free State, because it is the sole object of attachment which is elevated above every contention and division. But to maintain that importance, it must create attachment. We know that the Crown now does so fully; but we do not adequately bear in mind how much rectitude of intention, how much judgment in conduct, how much power of doing right, how much power of doing nothing, are requisite to unite the loyalty and to retain the confidence of a free people. . . . His (Prince Albert's) circumstances and perhaps his character, forbade him to attempt the visible achievements and the showy displays which attract momentary popularity. Discretion is a quality seldom appreciated till it is lost; and it was discretion which Prince Albert eminently possessed."

No quality was more adequately appreciated by Walter Bagehot than such discretion—the active principle of good sense.

In the month previous to the Prince Consort's death Walter Bagehot lost his old friend Arthur Clough, the poet and the subject of Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis". He died of fever at Florence on the 13th of November in his forty-third year. To quote afresh Mr. Hutton's words: "Clough ever remained to Bagehot a theme of profound intellectual and moral interest which lasted him his life, and never failed to draw him into animated discussion long after Clough's own premature death." At the time, however, of Arthur Clough's death Bagehot was engaged in work, the interest of which had, I think, somewhat freed him from this "intellectual fascination". His admiration for my father had also tended to effect this.

Of my father Bagehot wrote: "His conscientiousness was of a plain but very practical kind; he had a single-minded rectitude which went straight to the pith of a moral difficulty—

which showed him what he ought to do. On such subjects he was somewhat intolerant of speculative reasoning. 'The common sense is so and so,' he used to say, and he did not wish to be plagued with anything else." I think Bagehot felt the simplicity of my father's views had a wholesome effect upon his own mind. In the *National Review* of October, 1862, appeared Bagehot's article "Mr. Clough's Poems". In it we find together with much subtle appreciation the following :—

"Mr. Clough's career and life were exactly those most likely to develop and foster a morbid peculiarity of his intellect. He had, as we have explained, by nature, an unusual difficulty in forming a creed as to the unseen world ; he could not get the visible world out of his head ; his strong grasp of plain facts and obvious matters was a difficulty to him. Too easily one great teacher inculcated a remarkable creed ; then another great teacher took it away ; then this second teacher made him believe for a time some of his own artificial faith ; then it would not do. He fell back on that vague, impalpable, unembodied religion which we have attempted to describe."

Bagehot still continued to feel a reverence and admiration for his old friend ; this he shows in his essay on his poetry ; but circumstances no less than the natural trend of his own nature had, I think, changed his attitude towards what he called the peculiarity of Mr. Clough's intellect. He felt more and more that this peculiarity tended to a hair-splitting in moral and religious speculation which led to no definite enlightenment.

During the years spent together in Upper Belgrave Street, between our returning there in 1861 and my marriage in 1868, we had much of Walter at his best. Ordinary conversation became extraordinarily stimulating. Constantly there was an unexpected charge of wit given out in a quaint restrained tone of voice, a twist of whimsical fancy turned on to a very commonplace matter, which made the hours spent with him a revelry of good things. No *subject* was needed to make a conversation notable, everything was a *subject* with Walter Bagehot. The discussion of serious matters, equally with

those of a frivolous kind, was of no less original a quality. Everything he said carried with it that profound sense of reality which was so strong a characteristic of his mind. A passage in the essay on Shelley shows how he treats of the "higher air" which does *not* carry with it this sense. He writes: "Of course, all his [Shelley's] Works contain 'Spirits,' 'Phantoms,' 'Dream No. 1,' and 'Fairy No. 3,' but these do not belong to this world. The higher air seems never to have been favourable to the production of marked character; with almost all poets the inhabitants of it are prone to a shadowy thinness; in Shelley, the habit of frequenting mountain-tops has reduced them to evanescent mists of lyrical energy." Who but Walter Bagehot could hint with so neat a humour at the flimsy, dictatorial element in some of Shelley's arrangements when he flies into this "higher air"?

The natural affinity of one side of Walter Bagehot's mind was clearly for such wisdom and understanding as is taught us in the Book of Proverbs. In his Essay on Bishop Butler he applies Dr. Arnold's expression, *moral thoughtfulness* to his subject. The expression partly suggests his own attitude of mind. But in him this attitude, though certainly existing, was mitigated in rigour by elasticity of temperament, buoyant spirits, and a general happiness of nature. He knew, through personal experience, that an attitude of *moral thoughtfulness* need not be allowed to overpower all other valuable qualities. He writes that it cannot but be doubted "how far such teaching as that of Arnold tends to introduce a too stiff and anxious habit of mind; how far the perpetual presence of a purpose, will interfere with the simple happiness of life, and how far also it *can* be forced on the 'lilies of the field'; how far the care of anxious minds and active thoughts is to be obtruded on the young, on the cheerful, on the natural".

The tenet which Walter Bagehot held, and consistently put into practice, was *Live and let Live.* This tolerance infused into the atmosphere of family life a singularly nutritious flavour. The saying "A gentleman is careful of the dignity of others" fits well into the memories of Walter Bagehot, recalling the invariable consideration he paid to every feeling or interest in

those about him, however different from his own they might be, providing always they were *real* feelings and *real* interests. He writes: "we may admire what we cannot share; reverence what we do not imitate. As those who cannot comprehend a strain of soothing music, look with interest on those who can; as those who cannot feel the gentle glow of a quiet landscape, yet stand aside and seem inferior to those who do; so in character, the buoyant and the bold, the harsh and the practical, may, at least for the moment, moralise and look upwards, reverence, and do homage when they come to a close experience of what is gentler and simpler, more anxious and more thoughtful, kinder and more religious than themselves."[1] A strong sympathy and kindliness towards his fellow-creatures as fellow-creatures, especially towards the young and those with whom he was connected, made him highly sensitive to their interests. To those of his sisters-in-law he proved himself as keenly alive as if they had been sisters of his own. In family life, no less than in political and financial affairs, it was the sense of absolute trust inspired by Walter Bagehot which won confidence and secured the great influence he possessed. Even had he not inherited strict principles as to right and wrong, he was too wise not to have preferred the straight to the crooked paths. Intellectually as well as morally he was profoundly sound. He allowed no personal predilections, no inclination of his mind or of his feelings to over-ride his reasoned opinions. None of the "taking" qualities that inspire passing *engouements* and fashions in the public mind, no exciting movements, ever made his judgment swerve from the reality of truth. A friend of ours who had been a constant inmate of our home before and after Walter Bagehot entered it, would converse in a singularly pleasant and ingenious fashion on questions affecting the prosperity of the country; but was apt at times to indulge in eloquent flights of argument, aerial theories, and prophetic convictions, all based more or less on a cloud arrangement of his own creation. After a lively spurt of such ingenuity, I remember Walter, in a kindly, sarcas-

[1] Essay on Bishop Butler.

tic, slightly speculative tone, opened his dark, round eyes very wide, turned his head a little on one side, and said quietly: "Most valuable information, *if true!*" much in the same spirit as he would—to quote Mr. Hutton—utter his satirical "Hear, hear!"—a formidable sound in the debating society, and one which took the heart out of many a younger speaker; and the ironical "How much?" with which in conversation he would meet an over-eloquent expression, was always apt to reduce a man, as the mathematical phrase goes, to his "lowest terms". Walter Bagehot keenly felt the responsibility of eloquence, and how morally cheap it could be when let forth merely as an exciting game, or to support an unsound argument in too persuasive a fashion (see passages in his article "Mr. Gladstone"). He thought eloquence not *safe* unless it were the outcome of profound conviction and deep feeling. It was a power likely to do mischief and lead astray if not safeguarded by rigid conscientiousness and a power of true perception. His own mental survey embraced a wide horizon. He looked beyond the obvious expediency in a question, and from this wider outlook worked back, so to speak, on to the consideration of every-day practical matters. He recognised the importance of acting deliberately and wisely in these commonplace occurrences, for he knew the influence commonplace events can have on the lives of the great majority, who in this world lead commonplace lives. But, however far-reaching might be the ideas which Walter Bagehot brought to bear on daily concerns, they were conveyed invariably in a natural, familiar manner, without any alarming impressiveness.

In those Belgrave Street days he was especially talkative at breakfast. It was flattering to hear him say that he found it more amusing to breakfast with his sisters-in-law than to join breakfast parties to which he was asked, given by Gladstone and other notable people. At The Arches he had generally had before him the anxiety of catching his train. Here he had not, so would linger, wandering about the room, and continuing to talk, his mind fresh, his spirits buoyant. No attitude of "moral thoughtfulness" ever extinguished the *boy* in Walter Bagehot. It is exasperating to think of the

many good things that came out while he paced up and down the Belgrave Street dining-room, and yet to have made no record of them. But there are warnings against the attempt to put them down on paper. Others have made the attempt. I think it is wiser to refrain. I feel with Henry Sawtell that it is useless to try to conjure up Bagehot's wit for those who have no picture of Bagehot himself in their mind's eye. President Woodrow Wilson, never having seen him, wrote a brilliantly understanding essay on Bagehot as "A Wit and a Seer," inspired by his writings. His talk, however, was more amusing even than his writings. But the gist of it was evoked by the subject of the moment, by the person to whom he was speaking, by his or her peculiar interests or characteristics. The pith of it could not be conveyed without a vision of Bagehot himself, and the situation which evoked it. Egoism was totally absent. The last *rôle* he would have wished to play was that of a professional wit. He was never known to have been guilty of a monologue. Conversation never went beyond the limits of conversation proper. As Lord Bryce, in a letter to Mr. Hutton, after Bagehot's death, wrote: "one seemed to gain more profit as well as pleasure from a talk with him [Walter Bagehot] than with almost any one else, all the more so because, however much one felt his superiority, it always remained conversation, and not, as so often with great talkers, a lecture or a declamation".

The charm of his funny sayings lay in their unpremeditated quaintness, in their *not* being made up. He knew no more how his wit came out than did those who enjoyed it. It was inspired nonsense, and Walter's nonsense would have satisfied Pitt, or any other, fastidious in the art.

Besides the breakfast-table at home another happy field for expansion in this art was the *Spectator* office. From early days Mr. Hutton was accustomed to get his full share. Bagehot soon became intimate with Mr. Townsend, his co-editor. "I go round to the *Spectator* Office," he used to say, "to know what is going to happen. Townsend can always prophesy." In after years, referring to his constant visits, Mr. Meredith Townsend writes: "Do you know I doubt if I ever

received a letter from Mr. Bagehot in my life. If he had anything to say he ran in to the *Spectator*, and if I had anything to say I ran in to the *Economist*. I am quite sorry, for any letter of his was sure to be full of witty wisdom." In a letter to my sister written in 1905, Miss Helen Gladstone records a saying of Walter's, uttered about that time: "I think the only time I met Mr. Bagehot to speak to was a very long time ago when he came to one of my father's Thursday breakfasts at 11 Carlton House Terrace, but we left that house over thirty years ago; I only remember distinctly one thing that he told us; that he knew what a nut felt like when it was going to be cracked, as he once got his head caught between a cart-shed and a lamp-post."

To the world at large who did not know him personally, Bagehot was viewed as a sedate and reserved person, the grave director of the *Economist*, who interviewed statesmen on important questions; who went down to the City and was treated as a person of importance when he got there; who edited the *National Review*, and wrote essays which were thought much of by those whose opinion was of moment.

President Woodrow Wilson writes: "He [Bagehot] became editor of the *London Economist* and brought questions of finance to the light in editorials which clarified knowledge and steadied prediction in such fashion as made him the admiration of the Street. The City had never before seen its business set forth with such lucidity and mastery.

"Such a capital as London is a huge intellectual clearing-house, and men get out of it, as it were, the net balances of the nation's needs and thoughts. Bagehot both took and gave a great deal in such a place. His mind was singularly fitted to understand London, and every complex group of men and interest. He had the social imagination that Burke had, and Carlyle,—that every successful student of affairs must have, if he would scratch but a little beneath the surface or lift the mystery from any transaction whatever. For minds with this gift of sight there is a quick way opened to the heart of things. Their acquaintance with any individual man is but a detail in their acquaintance with men; and it is

noteworthy that, though they gain in mastery, they do not gain in insight by their contact with men and with the actual business of the world." This was most aptly true of Bagehot, whose insight was singularly intuitive.

Notwithstanding a very full life of grave occupations, he found time to ride with his sisters-in-law in the park, to drive his wife nearly every day in their phaeton, and to join much in the social life of our family, keeping up the while with his old friends and early associations. He continued to pay constant visits to Herd's Hill, combining these with the fortnightly meetings of the directors of Stuckey's Bank, and quarter sessions held at Wells or Taunton. He occasionally stayed with his old friends Sir Arthur and Lady Elton at Clevedon Court, and with Mr. Freeman, the historian, who, in 1860, bought a place called Somerleage, near Wells. Walter and my sister did not as a rule pay many country visits, as most of the available time out of London was spent at Herd's Hill. Mr. and Mrs. Bagehot were very generous in their invitations to all our family, and we constantly enjoyed their hospitality.

Much going out and much entertaining at Upper Belgrave Street went on in those days, drawing-rooms, state balls, political "At Homes," dinners, luncheons, balls, the opera and theatres. Friends would come in every afternoon to five o'clock tea. Walter, however, never assisted at this function. Mr. Greg, who was then Controller of the Stationery Office, would come nearly every day straight from his office at five o'clock, and often returned to dinner. Our house was a second home to him, while his own, on Wimbledon Common, was at our disposal when any member of our family wanted change of air. There was a constant going to and fro between Park Lodge and Upper Belgrave Street. Mr. Greg wrote on political questions, and he and Bagehot discussed these subjects together. They had mutual friends notable in the literary and political world, and pleasant dinner-parties took place at both houses, remarkable for the intellectual distinction of the guests. It suited Bagehot to have social life going on around him, provided he was not responsible for the arrange-

ments, and that he could join, or not, as he felt inclined. On the occasion of a ball my mother gave, my sister wrote to Mrs. Bagehot: "I think our ball went off well. It was very full (nearly 300 people) and spirited, and we kept it up till half-past three. Walter really enjoyed it, and behaved quite nicely, not retiring once till he slipped away to bed at a quarter before three." My sister wrote almost every day to Mrs. Bagehot giving her an account of the doings of the family. All these letters were preciously preserved, and exist unto this day.

Every one consulted Bagehot about any event that happened in our family. Walter could always *understand.* He gave the best advice in an amusing form, and was never known to rub any one the wrong way. The romances of his sisters-in-law were subjects of interest to him; he never in fact seemed indifferent about anything concerning those about him. I remember going to him to air some grievance I had against "disturbing influences".[1] He was sympathetic and consoling; "Get to your Ruskin,—you will soon forget all about it. I have been through the same sort of thing over and over again, and books have always come to the rescue." Throughout his life, books were as healing balm to Bagehot. He never smoked, and when, as a youth, a friend told him that his cigars cost him £30 per annum, Walter exclaimed, "But imagine how many books that would buy!"

On Sundays he would often lunch with his friends, Lord and Lady Carnarvon, and in the afternoons drive my sister to Hampstead to see his Uncle and Aunt Reynolds, or ride to the Priory, St. John's Wood, where on Sunday afternoons Mr. and Mrs. Lewes (George Eliot) entertained their friends. His uncle was the chief supporter of the Evangelical newspaper *The Record*, and Mr. and Mrs. George Lewes were steeped in German philosophy of most unorthodox tendencies!

[1] I had been living with Ruskin's *Modern Painters* and his *Elements of Drawing* for two years. Mr. Ruskin had kindly given me lessons, and I had through his advice been studying painting in Mr. Arthur Hughes's studio, and was too much engrossed in these matters to care to go into society, and, not being strong, felt the constant sociability going on at home somewhat oppressive.

The quaint contrast amused Bagehot. His power of detachment enabled him to feel an interest in all varieties of creeds and opinions, the while retaining complete independence of thought and belief.

When paying a visit to Mr. Chichester Fortescue and Lady Waldegrave at Strawberry Hill, Walter and my sister met the Duc and Duchesse d'Aumale, then living at Orleans House, Twickenham. This acquaintance with Bagehot the Duc d'Aumale furthered.

Bagehot seldom remained in London long at a time. If he had any special piece of writing to get through, he and my sister would go for a few days to the sea, or to any place where pleasant scenery tuned his mind to a happy key and stimulated the growth of ideas. He would carry about with him minute pocket-books and in very faint pencil marks dot down notes when he was travelling, walking, riding or driving, or lying down on a sofa to rest. He always preferred lying down or standing to sitting. He had high desks made at which he would stand when writing.

In September, 1861, the Bagehots were in search of a quiet out-of-the-way seaside place, not too far from London. In the Diary, 23rd September, is recorded: "We started for Christchurch at 3 and reached it at 7, and put up at Newlyn's Hotel. 24th.—Drove till dark looking for watering places—to Mudeford, Milford and Kielhaven—nearly as far as Hurst Castle. 25th.—Drove to Mudeford and took Mount Pleasant. Found Zoë and Emy arrived from London at hotel. 29th September, Sunday. Beautiful mild day. Walter and I sat on beach and he read me poetry from *Palgrave's Collection.* Walter, Zoë and Emy walked afternoon to opposite hills across the ferry. 30th.—Walter, Zoë and Emy went to beach before breakfast. Afternoon.—I had a donkey and we all went to the opposite hills, taking the donkey in the ferry-boat, and sat in the heather. Went round by sand hills, and donkey lay down with me and sunk in the mud. We were obliged to get assistance and leave Walter with the donkey boy, and got home in the dark. A sea-captain helped the donkey out."

This is the plain statement of an event which lives in my memory as a very amusing picture. Walter's boyish delight in a comical situation came out in full force. He had always enjoyed a joke against my sister for her preferring donkeys to more spirited animals. He entirely enjoyed the donkey's behaviour on that evening. The sun had gone down behind the sand hills above us, and a deep shadow was cast over the group surrounding the passive animal, who did not seem to mind in the least how far down in the mud he sank. It was a lonely piece of country, without trees or houses in sight. Walter managed with difficulty to get the donkey to stand on its legs, but the legs began sinking into the mud. Then he sent the donkey boy to fetch boards, and scooped each leg separately out of the mud, and placed them on the boards. But boards and legs together began to sink, and were continuing to do so when we sisters fled, leaving Walter and the donkey boy to cope with the situation, as twilight was fast turning into darkness. How the "sea-captain" succeeded in extricating the donkey history does not relate, but Walter returned to Mount Pleasant saying that he had.

The October number of the *National Review* containing Bagehot's article on "The American Constitution" came out while we were at Mudeford, and from Mount Pleasant, Walter wrote to Mr. Gladstone: "I have ventured to desire the publishers of the *National Review* to send you the last number, which contains an article of mine on the 'American Constitution' and its effects just now. It has seemed to me that these have been a good deal overlooked in the midst of the more striking facts of the present crisis, and yet that they are very important. I should not, however, send you my article if what I have heard called the 'Plenary power of *not* reading' did not place the remedy in your own hands.

"I am,

"Yours sincerely,

"WALTER BAGEHOT."

Mr. Gladstone wrote in answer from Hawarden :—

"DEAR MR. BAGEHOT—I thank you very much for having

favoured me with a copy of the *National Review:* and I have lost no time in reading your very able and highly instructive article on the American Constitution.

"I have always thought, and still think it, the greatest work that was ever struck off at a heat by the makers of such articles. Nor do I think the framers of 1787 are discredited by the failure of 1861, when we remember what has occurred between I am afraid the case stands much worse for their descendants than for them. Not the rupture but the work of meeting the rupture is damaging indeed. I agree, however, in all your strictures upon their work; but there is one point on which I am moved at any rate to a suspense of judgment. I am by no means clear that the secession is expressly forbidden by the Constitution, and think it arguable—as far as my recollection goes—that the present case is a *Casus omissus* in the document. If it be so, the South have much to say on the point of competency, however bad may be the result of their movement."

In February, 1862, Bagehot delivered a lecture at the Langport Literary and Scientific Institution. His subject was *Literature* and he advised his audience to make it a rule of reading the whole of the *Times* every day, including the advertisements. It would know then, he said, what the world was really about.

In May, 1862, there is an entry in the Diary: "Walter dined at Mr. Crabb Robinson's to meet Mr. F. D. Maurice, Dr. Martineau, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Cookson". The day after this dinner it is recorded that the Bagehots left for Bognor in the afternoon. The following day Walter began writing his pamphlet on the "Great Expenditure in Preparation for War". He had gone into retreat to Bognor for the purpose of writing this pamphlet. It was finished in two days and christened *Count your Enemies and Economise your Expenditure.*

During that visit to Bognor, Walter read to my sister Mr. Hutton's "Tract for Priests and People on the Incarnation". This "Tract" was Mr. Hutton's declaration of faith, which severed him unmistakably from every grade of religious opinion outside the Roman or Anglican Church. He resigned

the editorship of the *National Review* in June, 1862. Mr. Charles Henry Pearson, Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, succeeded him. In 1862 Mr. Pearson wrote in *The Story of My Life:* "I was asked if I would take the editorship of the *National Review*, which Hutton had just resigned. He and Grant Duff recommended me for the post, and I indiscreetly accepted it, partly because I did not thoroughly understand the difficulties of the situation. Although not professedly an organ of Unitarian views, the *National Review* had been founded by James Martineau and a few friends who disliked the tone of the *Westminster Review* as too negative. Under the brilliant editorship of Hutton and Bagehot the *Review* rose to a circulation of 1,500 in England and America, and was able to pay its way. When the American war broke out the American sale stopped altogether, and the editors had to fall back upon the founders of the *Review* for support. This was forthcoming, but could only be looked upon as a temporary expedient. . . . Hutton, who had long wished to break off his connection with the *Review*, now definitely resigned. The intense conviction with which he held the doctrine of the Incarnation made even a neutral position on that point distasteful to him, and he chafed under the pecuniary obligation to a Unitarian benefactor whose views could not be represented in the *Review*. I saw no insurmountable difficulty in the situation. I could not have worked a Unitarian review, but the idea of inviting impartial criticism and discussion from men of all opinions appeared thoroughly satisfactory. I was reasonably confident that I could enlist several of the more liberal Anglicans in the service of the *Review*."

A cordial feeling sprang up between Bagehot and Mr. Pearson. On 23rd May, 1863, the Diary relates that "Walter and I went to Oxford—dined with Mr. Pearson in the Fellows' common room at Oriel College, and met the Master of Lincoln and Mrs. Pattison, Mr. Henry and Miss Smith, Mr. Grote, Mr. Hutton and Dr. Acland. 24th.—Walter breakfasted at Oriel with Mr. Pearson, the Smiths, etc. After service Mr. Pearson took us and Mr. Hutton to the Museum, Exeter Chapel, and Balliol, where we lunched with Dr. Jowett.

Walter dined in Balliol Hall and I with Miss Smith, where the gentlemen joined us."

Differences of opinion arose, however, between Mr. Pearson and Bagehot as to the proportion theology ought to take in the pages of the *National Review*. Mr. Pearson considered "that theology was the dead weight against which the *Review* had to struggle". Bagehot thought that there ought to be at least two religious articles in every number. "I determined," wrote Mr. Pearson, "to resign the editorship. My connection with the *Review* lasted altogether a year. (July 1862 to July 1863.) I felt giving up the *National Review* very much."[1]

Bagehot remained sole editor till the end of 1864, when the *Review* died. Bagehot's interest in it had been great. It had brought him congenial work when he had felt a special need of it. That need no longer existed, but he felt parting with it as from an old friend.

In the month of August, 1863, the Bagehots made a journey in France to visit some of the cathedrals and churches at Abbeville, Rouen, Caen, Vitre, Mont St. Michel. They came upon the Francis Palgraves making a similar tour. Bagehot writes to one of his sisters-in-law from Avranches: "We are here in Normandy, moving about and amusing ourselves in old French towns. It amuses me and is beautifully idle, as we do not see the *monumens* particularly or laboriously. I met here, however—that is in Normandy and not at Avranches—an old friend of mine, Palgrave, —the man whose artistic handbook to the exhibition was so much abused,—and he has expounded the cathedrals, and made us understand a little. He is just married to a young wife of a Unitarian family, after writing poetry about a million women, and publishing much of it." During this tour the Bagehots paid a visit to M. Guizot at his Château Val Richer, near Lisieux. His daughters, the Mesdames de Witt and their husbands were living there with him at that time.

It was in 1863 that the friendship began between Bagehot and Lord and Lady Carnarvon. After paying his first visit

[1] *The Story of My Life*, Charles Henry Pearson.

to Highclere he writes in a letter: "I have been at Highclere, Lord Carnarvon's, who is one of my sort, and has run to mind, and wanted me to help to keep his house more decently reasonable while the fast people were there. We had Lord and Lady Ashley, Lord Stanhope (Lady Carnarvon's brother), Lady Dorothy Neville—a pretty woman with an old husband, and several young men. The women wore wonderful dresses, and we played cards rather high, always in the evening and sometimes in the morning—at least some people played in the morning.—I kept my character for wisdom and did not. Lord Carnarvon will be Secretary of State for the Colonies when the Tories come in. Lady Carnarvon is very clever and literary—at least with *snaps* of Literature. They will be *people* for some years to come, for they are both clever, very ambitious and have a beautiful place near London to entertain in." The friendship formed at this time between Bagehot and the Carnarvons resulted in pleasant intercourse and frequent visits which continued up to the time of Bagehot's death.

After this first visit Lord Carnarvon writes from Torquay: "Lady C. has just shown me your letter to her and I see by it that you are in the West of England. We hope to go to-morrow to our Somersetshire place, which my mother makes her head-quarters, and as you will then not be at any great distance I cannot resist pressing you to come over and let me show you what is—I need not scruple to say —a beautiful country, though it is somewhat out of the world. My mother will be delighted to make your acquaintance and you will like to know her. We propose to stay there till next Monday, 28th, and on any day between this and that day you will be welcome. I ought to warn you that you will have a rather long drive, though a very pretty one, from Tiverton. I have just finished Freeman's *Norman Conquest.* It is by far to my mind the best thing he has ever done, and in my humble judgment I rate it very highly as a piece of historical criticism. If you come to us I shall look forward to talking some of the points over with you. I have educated myself too much on Sir F. Palgrave to accept one or two of his doctrines."

His best energies Bagehot expended in writing. During the year 1862 he wrote the pamphlet *Count Your Enemies and Economise Your Expenditure*, three articles for the *National Review*—"Lady Mary Wortley Montagu," "The Ignorance of Man," and "Mr. Clough's Poems,"—and at least two articles every week for the *Economist*. In its pages between the years 1859 and 1877 are found articles by him on all the events political and commercial of any significance that took place during that time. For these eighteen years he was responsible for everything that appeared in the *Economist*, and having regard to the special character of the journal, he naturally felt it to be all-important that nothing should appear, or be supposed to appear, without the full sanction of the one who was directly responsible. Frequently would he emphasise that it was the *Economist* and the *Economist alone*, that spoke. Glancing, however, through those old numbers, Bagehot's own pen is very easily discerned, not merely from the style, but from the manner in which the matter is treated. The authoritative tone, denoting full knowledge and a deliberate judgment, the wide aspect taken of a subject, the general principles on which arguments were based, the realistic and humorous asides worked into most questions, distinctly mark the articles to be by him. Take, for instance, two characteristic articles headed, "The Emperor of the French," in the issues of 28th November and 5th December, 1863, written at the time when Europe was alive with rumours of war. Since the days of the *Coup d'État* Bagehot had watched the career of Napoleon III. with keen interest, speculating on what would come next, what would be the *dénouement* of it all—whether or not, his own theories would be corroborated by events. Ending the first of these articles he writes:—

"To sum up all, he has a restless, scheming, brooding, *cavernous* mind; daring in idea—hesitating when it comes to action; a singular mixture of tenacity and inconsistency; recoiling before the difficult and hazardous; shrinking from the irrevocable; and certain not to venture on the desperate. For the rest, unusually far-seeing and forecasting; thoroughly understanding his nation, his day, and his position; and,

perhaps, beyond any other statesman in the world, acting with a purpose and on a system."

Bagehot felt very keenly the death of Sir George Cornewall Lewis which occurred in 1863. "There has been no statesman in our time whom he [Bagehot] liked so much or regretted so deeply," wrote Mr. Hutton. Sir G. C. Lewis felt a singularly warm affection for my father. It was rare in him to entertain any such distinct feeling for a colleague.[1] It was this friendship which started in the first instance an intimacy between him and Bagehot. They met frequently. Sir G. C. Lewis's intellectual attainments attracted Bagehot even more perhaps than his powers as a statesman, great as these were. As a study his unique personality was eminently interesting to Bagehot, as shown in the article which appeared in the October number of the *National Review*, 1863.[2]

In the *Economist* of 10th September, 1864, Bagehot wrote on "The Tribute at Hereford to Sir G. C. Lewis," on the occasion of the uncovering of his statue. The article concluded with the following passage: "Sir George Lewis is gone, but he has left a remembrance in many minds which will not grow cold while they are still warm. For many years it will, to many, be much to have known one who was learned and yet wise, just but yet kind; considerate and observing, and yet never in the least severe."

These words might justly be quoted of Bagehot himself.

In answering a letter from Mr. Gladstone, who had read the

[1] This friendship dated from early days. Kent House, Knightsbridge, where Sir G. C. and Lady Theresa Lewis lived in London, is associated with many memories of childhood. It was there my two sisters (Mrs. Orbey Shipley, and Mrs. W. S. Halsey) and I (aged eight) made our *début* at a children's ball given by Lady Theresa for her two young daughters. She also arranged classes for singing and drawing in order that they should have companionship, which classes I joined. Every Saturday afternoon during the summer Alice Lister (Lady Borthwick) entertained us in the garden of Kent House. I remember well the grace and kindness of her elder sister (Mrs. Vernon Harcourt), and the delightful geniality of Lady Theresa. Sir G. C. Lewis I can only recollect as a grave figure, seen, if at all, in the distance.

[2] *A Dialogue on the Best Form of Government*, by the Right Hon. Sir G. C. Lewis, Bart., M.P., London, 1863.

article, Bagehot writes: "I am very gratified to find that you think I have not entirely missed the mark in my estimate. There is no *picture* of Sir G. Lewis in the public mind, and I suppose there will never be. The *Times* said he was 'a distinguished expositor of Niebuhr's opinions,' and I suppose if there was anything he wished *not* to have been said, this was it."

In November, 1863, we were painfully reminded of our great calamity resulting from the Indian climate. We were seeing Lady Augusta Bruce and her sister, Lady Charlotte Locker, who were staying at St. James's Place. In the Diary there is an entry: "27th November.—Lady Charlotte Locker called in the morning and lunched with us. Had a telegram from Lady Elgin stating that Lord Elgin had been very ill; but was better." "28th November.—Telegraph published announcing Lord Elgin's life despaired of on the 14th." Lord Elgin telegraphed from Dharmsala his resignation of the Governor-Generalship, and "summoned to his bedside from Calcutta Dr. Macrae, the same physician who had attended James Wilson in his last illness". He died before the month was out. Bagehot wrote a striking article in the *Economist* of 5th December, headed, "The Indian Viceroyalty," in which he stated how universally the appointment of Sir John Lawrence to replace Lord Elgin had been approved, and explained the reason of this general satisfaction, both in England and in India. He describes the difference of the qualities required in an English Premier and an India Viceroy. "'He'll keep the horses straight,' say the clubs of a Minister whom they expect to be efficient, the movement of the horses being taken for granted. 'He'll make the horses "chub"' (go) will be the remark on Sir John Lawrence, the immobility of the steeds being the habitual starting-point. . . . Above all, the Viceroy has from the special necessity of his position, as representative of a civilised race among a half-civilised one, to keep a vast population which wants to recede, perpetually advancing. He must compel it somehow to become every year a little more orderly, a little more enlightened, a little more wealthy, a little more ready to keep step with the march

of European ideas; and to do it he must have driving power. Wisdom, knowledge, originality, experience, tact, everything Englishmen value are, without this one faculty, simply valueless. Be the road laid out ever so well, the mass will not stir till it is pushed, and he who pushes hardest gets it along most inches. The single quality, in fact, without which an Indian Viceroy fails, is that which, for want of a better word, we must term 'force'; and it is because Sir John Lawrence has force, and has it in an exceptional and most unusual degree, that he will make a better Viceroy than any of the many statesmen who in every quality, *save* that, may surpass him."

During the autumn of 1864, various circumstances necessitated Bagehot's remaining within easy reach of London. After staying a month at Herd's Hill he and my sister settled at Great Marlow for six weeks in the Angler's Inn on the river. The associations of the place with Shelley were attractive. From boyhood Bagehot had found a friend in Shelley. When at Bristol College, at the age of thirteen, he wrote to his father that he had found consolation in a fit of depression by reading Shelley. In 1849 he wrote a paper on Shelley which he sent to his friend Roscoe to criticise. This did not appear in print, though probably some of it was incorporated in the article which was published in the *National Review* in 1856. The intensity of Shelley's genius fascinated Bagehot. "An idea," he writes, "an emotion grew upon his brain, his breast heaved, his frame shook, his nerves quivered with the 'harmonious madness' of imaginative concentration." The crystalline delicacy of Shelley's verse awoke a thrill of delight; the strange tragedy in Shelley's life aroused a pitiful speculative wonder. "It shows," Bagehot wrote, "how the impulsive temperament, not definitely intending evil, is hurried forward, so to say, over actions and crimes which would seem to indicate deep depravity,—which would do so in ordinary human nature, but which do not indicate in it anything like the same degree of guilt. Driven by singular passion across a tainted region, it retains no taint; on a sudden it passes through evil but preserves its purity. So curious is this character that a record of its actions may read like a libel on its life." In

1816 Shelley and his wife visited Thomas Love Peacock at Great Marlow, and in 1817 returned there for a year. They lived in Albion House, a dwelling now divided into two residences, making part of a street, but then a house by itself on a country road. Still can be seen the garden which Shelley describes, and the "mound surrounded by cypresses and yews with a cedar tree among them". "My thoughts for ever cling to Windsor Forest and the copses of Marlow," wrote Shelley from Lucca. In his boat *The Vaga* he had wandered up and down the reaches of the Thames. "I have often met him," writes one of Lady Shelley's friends, "going or coming from his island retreat near Medenham Abbey. . . . He was the most interesting figure I ever saw; his eyes like a deer's, his white throat unfettered."[1] It was at Great Marlow, maybe in this island retreat, hidden by leaning willows and crowded quivering rushes, near the ancient Abbey, that Shelley wrote "Laon and Cythna" and "The Revolt of Islam". In that year at Great Marlow the pamphlet "A Proposal for putting Reform to the Vote" and Mrs. Shelley's "Frankenstein" also were written.

Soon after arriving at Great Marlow, the Bagehots asked me to join them there. It was a delightful visit. Much time was spent on the river, and there were many lovely things to draw. The ponies had arrived from Herd's Hill, and Walter's horse from London. Nowhere was he so happy as in the saddle, and driving the ponies came next among out-of-door pleasures. Everything connected with Walter Bagehot seemed to borrow something of his own individuality. His ponies, "Charlie" and "Fanny," his horse "Plaything," were somehow more distinctly his own than other people's horses and ponies seem to be theirs. Most mornings Bagehot rode, most afternoons he drove us in my sister's phaeton, most evenings we rowed on the river and much poetry was read.

At Great Marlow, besides writing articles for the *Economist*, he was engaged on his last contribution to the *National Review*: "Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning, or Pure,

[1] See quotation from Professor Dowden's Life in Clement Shorter's *Highways and Byways in Buckinghamshire.*

Ornate and Grotesque Art in English Poetry". Poetry fitted well into the atmosphere of the place. The incidents of one afternoon I recollect very clearly. A lady friend of mine, also staying with the Bagehots, drove the ponies instead of Walter. He rode, and I walked by "Plaything's" side. We went along paths by the river-side, out-of-the-way lanes, and through the copses immortalised by Shelley, talking as we went, Walter humorous and quaint, "Plaything" ambling and inclined to resent being restrained to keep pace with me. It was an afternoon when every colour was intensified. The sun struck with dazzling storm-heat on the river, a bright steely light flashed on the river reeds, the grass was aglow with gold shining through the green. We had wandered on for a couple of miles, not noticing that one side of the sky was inky purple. Then we saw drops like big black wafers fall at our feet; things began to move,—before, nothing had moved; a wind got up, fretting tbe surface of the water, sweeping the rushes flat with the stream, swaying the branches of the trees and whisking the foliage this way and that. Sheaves of silver willow sprays bowed low across the banks. Then the rain fell in torrents, the storm was there in good earnest, and we were two miles from the Anchor Inn. As at the Needles in the Isle of Wight, in the sea-storm, so, in this land storm, Walter's spirits rose as the elements became turbulent. He was very happy and much enlivened. The return journey was hilarious. We were being pelted on and buffeted by wind and driving rain. "Plaything" was exasperated at having to go at foot's pace. I did my best to hurry up. At last we got back to the inn,—in the highest spirits—drenched.

Early in January, 1865, while the Bagehots were paying their annual Christmas visit to Herd's Hill, Mr. Gladstone wrote to Walter saying he should like to see him with reference to the Bank Notes Issue Bill which he purposed bringing forward. The bill caused much discussion. Many interests were at stake. It was altered and re-altered. Bagehot wrote exhaustively on it in the pages of the *Economist*, and took an active part in the discussions at the bankers' meetings which took place in London, and by communicating confidentially

with Mr. Gladstone, he appears to have acted as a medium between the bankers and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

After seeing Bagehot in January, Mr. Gladstone writes from Hawarden the following letter marked *Private* :—

"On Friday when I had the pleasure of seeing you I mentioned that I had had under consideration last summer a plan which would have abolished all Banking restrictions for issuing banks, and would have imposed on them a moderate charge in consideration of the boon. I mentioned to you at the time that I was not clear in the recollection of particulars ; and I have not had the means of correcting my recollection since I saw you by reference to papers. But I have it to a certain degree by reflecting on what occurred : and I am now desirous to beg you to consider what I send as good for no purpose but the precise one for which I quoted it, namely as supporting the view that the proper basis for a voluntary commutation would not therefore of necessity be the proper basis for a compulsory measure.

"The compulsory or general form was that in which the plan first occurred to me : but that I think had been altogether cast aside before the time when I had some communications with you on the subject of a voluntary arrangement. Forgive this trouble."

In March Bagehot writes to Mr. Gladstone :—

"Since I saw you the deputation on bank issues have sent round the heads of the remonstrances they addressed to you. I cannot admit that as a principle it is vicious for a bank to draw on itself. Indeed it would be *absurd* to prevent the branches of a bank drawing on one another or on the head office. By an accident certain banks are excluded from London, but they draw on any place where they are allowed to have a bank. There is no magic in the place, *London :* if it be vicious for a bank to draw on itself, it is as vicious to draw on Bristol as on London. Secondly. This notion has nothing to do with banks of issue. The London & South Western Bank, which was established yesterday and has no issue, is allowed to draw on London, but if this banking were right a bill ought to he brought in to prevent it. The alleged

principle is a principle of *banking*, not of issue. Thirdly. The whole notion, I maintain, is based on a confusion of bills based on the sale of goods with remittance bills, bills having reference to the transit of *money*. It is of course vicious that a firm should draw a *sale* bill on itself, for it cannot sell to itself. The notion of purchase implies a distinct buyer, and a distinct seller. But it is otherwise with the remittance of money. If £100 is paid to Rothschild in Paris for remittance to England, Rothschild in Paris gives a bill on Rothschild in London, and surely without objection. There is no reason why the *remitter* and the *remittee* should be distinct people, as there is why the seller and buyer should be distinct people. Of course remittance business may be badly conducted like any other business, and it requires a certain capital, but, within proper limits, the transmission of money from place to place, by means of drafts by a bank with establishments in both places, is quite legitimate. Fourth. If the practice is to be put down it will revolutionise the Exchange business of the world. Time out of mind it has been conducted by *family* drafts of Jew on Jew. In an account published yesterday the Agra Bank shows nearly £5,000,000 of such exchange drafts. If the practice is bad there are the flagrant criminals. The inland drafts of the country are diminishing in consequence of the increased use of cheques, but the exchange in foreign drafts of bank on bank are growing and likely to grow with a marvellous rapidity.

"I beg your pardon for writing this to you, but I am very angry at seeing my name in the same paper with opinions from which I entirely dispute, and with the promulgation of which I had in fact nothing to do."

Mr. Gladstone forwarded this letter to a colleague who, when returning it, adds this note :—

"Thanks many. I am glad to think he has in his hands better reasons than any other person of explaining his own views to the world with efficient authority.

In April, Bagehot writes to Mr. Gladstone :—

"I am very much obliged to you for sending me in writing the proposed changes in the Bank of Issue Bill.

"Mr. Rodwell will send you the formal thanks of the Committee. The matter will take a little time in consequence of the scattered residences of the issuing bankers, but I hope and believe that you will have very little, if any, further trouble with us. Any other changes we may suggest will, I hope, be of a very subordinate character, and that the bill as altered will have the entire assent and the substantial support of the issuing bankers."

A day later Bagehot writes to Mr. Gladstone:—

"It of course is not possible to predict *with certainty* what such a body as the bankers may precisely do, but in this case I have no *reasonable doubt* that after the alterations you have so kindly made, they will give their *best aid* to the bill. I am sure they ought, and I am confident they will."

In the spring of 1865 Bagehot and Mr. Goschen (Lord Goschen) held consultations together on the proposed Consolidated Bank, a question which had been fully discussed in the *Economist*. The Goschen family had been for some years among our London acquaintances, but it was at this time that a closer intimacy sprang up between Mr. Goschen and Bagehot, and the esteem and liking each had for the other led to a frequent intercourse which continued to the end of Bagehot's life.

At Highclere, Bagehot was frequently meeting Liberal no less than Conservative politicians. In this year, 1865, Lord and Lady Salisbury and Mr. Robert Lowe were fellow guests with Bagehot. Lord Carnarvon had no party prejudices. He was drawn towards Bagehot none the less because his creed in politics was opposed to his own.

CHAPTER XIII.

"THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION."

On Sunday, 26th February, 1865, the Diary states: "Walter called on Mr. Lewes to talk over the *Fortnightly Review*, and saw Mrs. Lewes". This was the first of the many visits he paid to The Priory, St. John's Wood, which visits continued till the year of Walter's death. As a rule very reserved, Mrs. Lewes (George Eliot) would at times speak intimately to Walter Bagehot of her own personal experiences. In him she could count on an understanding of no ordinary quality. Walter described how she would discuss with him what she designated "the pain of composition". He liked her, and she interested him greatly. Beyond appreciating her genius he also regarded her as a rare physiological study. She seemed somewhat unfitted for ordinary society, he said. She was too big, too weighty a being for the usual world and its ways, and somewhat strange in respect to its small amenities. He discussed with Mr. Lewes during these first visits to The Priory the starting and prospects of the *Fortnightly Review*. Mr. Lewes, as the editor, was anxious to obtain contributions from him.

The *Fortnightly Review* made its *début* on 15th May, 1865. The first chapter of Walter Bagehot's *English Constitution* headed the list of contents. At intervals, during a year and a half the nine chapters of this work appeared under the titles—(1) "The Cabinet," (2) "The Monarchy," (3) "The Monarchy (continued)," (4) "The House of Lords," (5) "The House of Commons," (6) "On Change of Ministry," (7) "Its supposed Cheques and Balances," (8) "The Pre-Requisites of Cabinet Government, and the Peculiar Form which They Assumed in England," (9) "Its History and the Effects of that History

(conclusion)." The last chapter came out on 1st January, 1867, after Mr. Lewes had ceased to edit the *Fortnightly Review.* It would be superfluous to make any comments on the worth of this book, or the appreciation it has won for itself. In 1872, from The Poplars, Wimbledon, Bagehot wrote a rather lengthy introduction to the second edition, explaining the difficulty a writer experiences in attempting "to sketch a living Constitution—a Constitution that is in actual work and power. The difficulty is that the object is in constant change." He describes that the best plan, considering what has altered in the working of the Constitution since the book first appeared is, "to keep the original sketch in all essentials as it was first written, and to describe shortly such changes either in the Constitution itself or in the Constitutions compared with it, as seem material!"

Mr. George Lewes gave up the editorship of the *Fortnightly Review* at the end of 1866. The number in which the last chapter of the *English Constitution* appeared was unedited. On 10th February, 1867, the Diary states that "Mr. John Morley, the new editor of the *Fortnightly Review*, and Mr. Sanford dined with us".

About this time Mr. Goschen wrote to Bagehot: "I sent you some time ago an essay of Morier on local government.[1] I ought to tell you, he was very anxious that you should see it, as he says, 'I admire Bagehot's writings more than anybody's, the more so as they form such a delicious contrast to the only mode I can find of attacking a subject'. I hope I am not violating a confidence in telling you this."

Also referring to the *English Constitution*, Mr. A. V. Dicey writes to Mr. Hutton: "The more, by the way, I study Bagehot's book the more I admire it, though it so happens that the legal aspect of the Constitution with which I am mainly concerned is that side of it which did not fall within the scope of his work. I only wish one could accomplish a tenth as much for the explanation of the law as he did for the illustration of the Constitution. I do not think any one has

[1] Sir Robert Morier, the distinguished diplomatist, brilliant writer of despatches, and the arch enemy of Bismarck.

read Bagehot's works more carefully than I have. They really fill one with despair, for he seems to explain with perfect ease the kind of things which one can, after the greatest labour, only make clear (if at all) in language which is so stiff and pedantic that it disgusts oneself as much as it is likely to disgust one's readers."

On Sunday, 2nd April, 1865, there is this entry in the Diary: "Walked in Eaton Square, called on Mrs. Moffatt. While with her Mr. Moffatt came in from attending Mr. Cobden's deathbed." At the age of twenty, as already quoted, Bagehot had written to his old school-fellow, Sir Edward Fry, "I do not know whether you are much of a free-trader or not. I am enthusiastic about —, am a worshipper of Richard Cobden." When students together at University College, London, Mr. Hutton and he would fly about London to any gathering where they had the chance of hearing Cobden speak. Twenty-one years later Bagehot embodied the vivid impressions of those days in the first leader in the *Economist* of 8th April, 1865. "Twenty-three years ago—and it is very strange that it should be so many years—when Mr. Cobden first began to hold Free-Trade meetings in the Agricultural districts, people there were much confused. They could not believe the Cobden they saw to be the 'Mr. Cobden that was in the papers'. They expected a burly demagogue from the North, ignorant of rural matters, absorbed in manufacturing ideas, appealing to class-prejudices—hostile and exciting hostility. They saw a sensitive and almost slender man, of shrinking nerve, full of rural ideas, who proclaimed himself the son of a farmer, who understood and could state the facts of agricultural life far better than most agriculturalists, who was most anxious to convince every one of what he thought the truth, and who was almost more anxious not to offend any one. . . . The tradition is dying out, but Mr. Cobden acquired, even in those days of Free-Trade agitation, a sort of agricultural popularity. He excited a personal interest—he left what may be called a *sense* of himself among his professed enemies. They were surprised at finding that he was not what they thought; they were charmed to find that he was not what they expected;

they were fascinated to find what he was. The same feeling has been evident at his sudden death—death at least which was to the mass of occupied men sudden. Over political Belgravia—the last part of English society Mr. Cobden ever cultivated—there was a sadness. Every one felt that England had lost an *individuality* which it could never have again, which was of the highest value, which was in its own kind altogether unequalled. . . . He was a *sensitive* agitator. Generally an agitator is a rough man of the O'Connell type, who says anything himself, and lets others say anything. You 'peg into me and I will peg into you, and let us see which will win,' is his motto. But Mr. Cobden's habit and feeling were utterly different. He never spoke ill of any one. He arraigned principles but not persons. We fearlessly say that after a career of agitation of thirty years, not one single individual has—we do not say a valid charge, but a produceable charge—a charge which he would wish to bring forward, against Mr. Cobden. . . . Very rarely, if even ever in history, has a man achieved so much by his words—been victor in what was thought at the time to be a class struggle—and yet spoken so little evil as Mr. Cobden. There is hardly a word to be found, perhaps, even now, which the recording Angel would wish to blot. We may on other grounds object to an agitator who lacerates no one, but no watchful man of the world will deny that such an agitator has vanquished one of life's most imperious and difficult temptations.

"Perhaps some of our readers may remember as vividly as we do a curious instance of Mr. Cobden's sensitiveness. He said in Drury Lane Theatre, in tones of feeling, almost of passion, curiously contrasting with the ordinary coolness of his nature: 'I *could* not serve with Sir Robert Peel'. After more than twenty years, the curiously thrilling tones of that phrase still live in our ears. Mr. Cobden alluded to the charge which Sir Robert Peel had made, or half made, that the Anti-Corn Law League and Mr. Cobden had by their action and agitation, conduced to the actual assassination of Mr. Drummond, his secretary, and the intended assassination of himself, —Sir Robert Peel. No excuse or palliation could be made

for such an assertion, except the most important one, that Peel's nerves were as susceptible and sensitive as Mr. Cobden's. But the profound feeling with which Mr. Cobden spoke of it is certain. He felt it as a man feels an unjust calumny, an unfounded stain upon his honour. . . . There has never, perhaps, been another time in the history of the world when excited masses of men and women hung on the words of one talking political economy. The excitement of these meetings was keener than any political excitement of the last twenty years,—keener infinitely than any which there is now. It may be said, and truly, that the interest of the subject was Mr. Cobden's felicity, not his mind ; but it may be said with equal truth, that the excitement was much greater when he was speaking than when any one else was speaking. By a kind of keenness of nerve, he said the exact word to touch, not the bare understanding, but the quick individual perception of his hearers. . . . He did not possess the traditional education of his country, and did not understand it. . . . The late Mr. Wilson used to say, 'Cobden's administrative powers I do not think much of, but he is most valuable in counsel, always original, always shrewd, and not at all extreme'. . . . He has left us, quite independently of his positive works, of the repeal of Corn Laws, of the French Treaty, a rare gift—the gift of *unique* character. There has been nothing before Richard Cobden like him in English history, and perhaps there will not be anything like it."

It was ever the personality—the man himself—the woman herself—distinctive from their opinions, their achievements, their position, which stirred in Bagehot his most vivid sympathies. Having that within himself which passed beyond what is expected of most people,—beyond classifications of any sort, he felt those who likewise were thus separated from ordinary people as his nearest fellow-creatures, with whose natures he could feel a real intimacy. It requires genius to feel quite at home with genius.

"Sunday, 9th June, 1867. Great Marlow. We strolled by the river bank opposite Bisham Abbey. Rowed down the

river. Evening. I went to church afternoon, and Walter began his article on Hazlitt for the *Fortnightly Review.*" No record can be found of this article.

While Bagehot was at this time leading a stirring social and family life, and at the same time one of pressing business,—while he was watching every public event at home and abroad, weighing the rights and wrongs of every current question of importance and giving judgment thereon in the pages of *The Economist*,—interviewing and advising statesmen respecting measures to be brought before Parliament, a subtle machinery was at work in his brain weaving into some leading ideas borne in upon him certain new aspects of thought and science which had been evolved during the past fifty years or so, and turning these new aspects on to his own special subjects. The first chapter of *Physics and Politics* appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* on 1st November, 1867, ten months after the conclusion of *The English Constitution.*[1]

As in the case of the *English Constitution* it would be superfluous to make many comments on a book which for many years, in many countries, has taken its place as a classic. It is at once short, original, easy and profound. Perhaps more than any other of Bagehot's writings, *Physics and Politics* evinces signs of his multifarious gifts, and of the power he possessed of bringing first principles to bear on practical usages.

Sir Henry Maine writes :—

"My dear Bagehot,

"Thank you very sincerely for your book on *Physics and Politics.* It is practically an old friend. I do not know that I was ever more struck with anything than with the essays when they first appeared. I don't think it was your handsome allusions to me which influences me—but I am much obliged to you for them all the same.

"Very sincerely yours,

"H. I. Maine."

[1] This first chapter of *Physics and Politics* Bagehot then named "The Pre-economic Age," but when the work came out in book form he re-christened it "The Preliminary Age".

President Woodrow Wilson wrote:—

"Bagehot's thought is not often constructive. Its business is generally analysis, interpretation, but in Physics and Politics it is distinctly creative and architectonic. It was always his habit to go at once to the Concrete reality of a subject, lingering scarcely a moment upon its conventionalities: he sees always with his own eyes, never with another's; and even analysis takes from him a certain creative touch. The object of his thought is so vividly displayed that you seem to see all of it, instead of only some of it. But here, in speaking of ages past and gone, his object is reconstruction, and that direct touch of his imagination makes what he says seem like the report of an eye-witness. You know, after reading this book, what an investigator the trained understanding is, a sort of original authority in itself. Nor is his humour gone or exiled from these solemn regions of thought. There is an intermittent touch of it even in what he says of the political force of religion. 'Those kinds of morals and that kind of religion which tend to make the firmest and most effectual character,' he explains, 'are sure to prevail' in every struggle for existence between organised groups or nations of men, 'all else being the same; the creeds or systems that conduce to a soft limp mind tend to perish, except some hard extrinsic force keep them alive. Thus Epicureanism never prospered at Rome, but Stoicism did; the stiff, serious character of the great prevailing nation was attracted by what seemed a confirming creed. The inspiriting doctrines fell upon the ardent character, and so confirmed its energy. Strong beliefs win strong men, and then make them stronger. Such is no doubt one cause why Monotheism tends to prevail over Polytheism; it produces a higher, steadier character, calmed and concentrated by a great single object; it is not confused by competing rites, or distracted by miscellaneous duties. Mr. Carlyle has taught the present generation many lessons, and one of these is that 'God-fearing' armies are the best armies. Before his time people laughed at Cromwell's saying 'Trust God, and keep your powder dry'. But we now know that the trust was of as much use as the powder, if not of more. That high concentration of steady feeling makes men dare everything and do anything."

Bagehot's reputation as an authority on finance was already widespread on the Continent in the middle of the sixties. In the spring of 1865 when M. Rouher was Finance Minister in France, he invited Bagehot to give evidence before the *Enquête sur les Principes et les Faits generaux qui regissent la Circulation monetaire et fiduciaire* he was about to hold in Paris. On February 5th Walter and my sister arrived in Paris where they took rooms in the Grand Hotel. There they entertained at breakfast many political and financial magnates. They dined with notable people, attended evening parties, balls and concerts, and saw much of M. and Mme. Mohl. The Political Economy Society held their dinner in the Grand Hotel on the evening after the Bagehots' arrival, and M. Wolowski fetched Bagehot to introduce him to the Society, placing him at dinner next M. Passy, the President. A very interesting three weeks in Paris followed. The Emperor opened the *Corps Legislatif* on the 15th, and Bagehot went to the *Grande Salle* of the *Conseil d'état* on the 17th to give evidence before the "*Conseil Supérieur* charged with the inquiry into the principles and general facts which regulate the circulation of money". The manner in which he was entertained in Paris was flattering and agreeable to him. He found that in the best Paris society people knew how to talk, moreover that they had found out that he also could talk. The briskness and the finish notable in the intellect of the French *savant* had an exhilarating effect on Bagehot's nerves, ever most sensitive to the mental atmosphere about him.

Louis Napoleon had recently published his life of Julius Cæsar, and Bagehot while in Paris wrote the article for the *Economist* to which he gave the title *Cæsarism*.[1]

In May, 1865, Bagehot was approached with a view of his standing in the Liberal interest for Dudley in opposition to Mr. Sheridan. This he declined doing, but in the following month he was asked to stand for Manchester and consented. Mr. Charles Villiers, an old friend of my father's, and other leading Liberals were interested in Bagehot's

[1] See vol. iv. complete edition—reprinted from the *Economist*, 4th March, 1865.

prospects of success, and Mr. Gladstone wrote him the following letter :—

"11 CARLTON HOUSE TERRACE, S.W.,
"12*th June*, 1865.

"DEAR MR. BAGEHOT,

"It would be very great presumption on my part, in expressing an opinion as to your qualifications for Parliament, were I to connect that opinion with any particular constituency. But of the qualifications themselves neither I, nor, as I believe, anyone who knows you can have any doubt whatever ; and undoubtedly they point, of themselves, to the class of our great commercial and manufacturing constituencies in an especial degree. If thorough acquaintance with economic science, extensive and accurate knowledge, ready and practical habits of business and a conciliatory disposition, go to fit a man for the representation of these great national interests, it certainly appears to me that your fitness must stand without dispute in the first rank."

The diary, however, narrates : "Walter spoke at a meeting in the Town Hall at Manchester to about 400 people, but was badly received and gave up standing ".

In a family letter Walter wrote: "I tried to get into Parliament for Manchester this year, but Manchester could not 'see it'. I had a letter from Mr. Gladstone recommending me, but it was of no use. They said, 'If he is so celebrated, why does not Finsbury elect him ?' "

The lack of success which attended the three attempts Bagehot made to get into Parliament was a fact which puzzled many of his friends. Manchester was severely criticised in some of the newspapers for having rejected him, but these criticisms did not explain the reason why Manchester had done so. Walter Bagehot was known among his friends as a brilliant talker, but the success of his talk depended much on what the person was like to whom he was talking. As noted before, he never monologued, and when he made a speech he seemed to have failed in rhetorical power. His voice was not adapted to public speaking. Still, many men get into Parliament who are not successful public speakers and who

have no distinguished powers such as Bagehot possessed. To those who knew him most intimately, the puzzle that presented itself was, not why he did not succeed in getting a seat in the House, but why he ever attempted to do so; why he ever thought of complicating his existence with duties which in nowise would aid his inner life of thought already finding expression in such work as that of the *English Constitution*. The answer to this puzzle would be found, I believe, in the fact that strong home ties still influenced Bagehot's actions. His father, though deeply interested in politics, would not have attached much importance to any worldly prominence which Bagehot's gifts might have obtained for him, but his mother would have thoroughly enjoyed distinction of that kind for him. His position was not sufficiently defined to please her. That distinguished politicians held a high opinion of him was not enough, she wished him to be a distinguished politician himself. Bagehot would have done much to give his mother any pleasure. He felt so sorely for her in her saddest of troubles; but he could not put much real zest into his attempts to get a seat. He was expected to get into Parliament, and he went so far as to take the necessary measures when pressed by others to do so, but he had no fervent faith in the advantages of a Parliamentary career, no belief that it could aid the higher life—at all events not his higher life. There was a grain of cynicism in his attitude towards the electors which doubtless crept out and which tended to damp enthusiasm when it came to a contest. Many candidates may view with cynicism the part they have to play at an election, and feel that a little acting is necessary in their intercourse with the Philistine elector, and forthwith they set about to act their part. But acting was not in Bagehot's line.

Much more to his liking were the wonders of the Alps. Twenty-one years had passed since he had been ravished by the beauty of the mountains of Switzerland in company with his Uncle and Aunt Reynolds. In August, 1865, he found himself there again with my sister, driving over passes, riding mules on long day excursions, rowing in boats on the Lake of Geneva, watching storms and rainbows—marvels of

light and colour on the heights of Mont Blanc—walking by moonlight along the lake, reading Ruskin's rapturous utterances on mountain forms in *Modern Painters.*

Diary, "9th September, 1865, Chamonix. Studied Ruskin's chapter on Aiguilles with the examples under my own eyes from the window. 10th. We had mules and went to the 'Source de l'Arderon' and into the grotto of ice at the foot of the glacier des Bos. (the writing is interrupted here and there by a dried piece of heather and tiny flowers picked that day—still staining the page of Pawsey's London Diary). 14th. Walter wrote all day for the *Fortnightly—English Constitution.* 16th. Sat in the garden reading nearly all day. We rowed on the lake in the afternoon." Many days, the diary relates, it was sitting in the garden all day and rowing on the lake, with now and then an article sent off for the *Economist.*

From Geneva, Walter writes: "We are here amusing ourselves on the lake in as idle a manner as it is possible to conceive. So far from climbing mountains, we object to walk up a hill, and if we stay long enough, shall order a carriage to cross a molehill. I never can enjoy scenery when I am racketted; I like to sit down quietly in some charming place and let it sink into my mind."

By the middle of October, when the Bagehots and the rest of our family, after being scattered for the autumn months, had collected together again in Upper Belgrave Street, an event of great public importance occurred, one which also awakened in us many personal memories connected with my father. On the 18th October, 1865, Lord Palmerston died at Brockett Hall, Herts. From the year 1846, when my father first entered Parliament to the time of his leaving for India, he had had constant intercourse with Lord Palmerston, and the family attended Lady Palmerston's parties, which were expected to take place as regularly as Court functions, and were the most notable gatherings for all who moved in the so-called London world. Bagehot had had no personal intercourse with Lord Palmerston, but had studied his career as he did that of all contemporary and past statesmen, and wrote an article on him in the *Economist* three days after his death.

In the previous year in the article entitled "The Tribute at Hereford to Sir G. C. Lewis," is to be found the following passage relating to Lord Palmerston: "It is very curious that Lord Palmerston, who spoke, so to say, Sir George Lewis's epitaph, should have had the slowest, and that Sir George Lewis should have had the most rapid political rise of our time. Unquestionably, Lord Palmerston is in some sense a buoyant man, and Sir George Lewis was in some sense a heavy man, yet the latter came to the surface far quicker. Lord Palmerston was a quarter of a century in Parliament before he was anything at all—before he was more than a subaltern official; Sir George Lewis was only thirteen years in Parliament altogether, and in that time he was Secretary of the Treasury, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Home Secretary, Secretary for War, and had acquired the perfect respect and confidence of the House of Commons. He finished his whole career as a statesman in about half the number of years that it took Lord Palmerston to become a statesman at all."

In the *Economist* of 28th October, 1865, an article appeared by Bagehot on "The New Ministry," commencing with the following passages: "The Queen acted wisely in desiring that Lord Palmerston might be buried in Westminster Abbey. As we trace these lines his remains are being borne thither. It is easy to scoff at these great national ceremonies, for such they are. But such jests are weak and harmless. It will be centuries before Englishmen are indifferent to Westminster Hall or Westminster Abbey—'the place,' Lord Macaulay said, 'where the great men of twenty generations have contended, the place where they sleep together.'

"The best epitaph on Lord Palmerston is the effect of his death. It is the end of a political period. It has been said that the new Government would be Lord Palmerston's Government *minus* Lord Palmerston; it would be as wise to propose a solar system *minus* the sun. Lord Palmerston was the centre of attraction of his system. He had an influence, not over any single party or set of men, for he was disliked, or but half-liked, by the real zealots of every

party; but over the common, sensible, uncommitted mass of the nation who now-a-days do not strictly or rigidly adhere to any party. Through all the divisions of our present England there is a common element which consists of fair, calm, sensible persons, who have something to lose, who have no intention of losing it, who hate change, who love improvement, who *will* be ruled in a manner they understand. The business of the nation in all departments is transacted by such men as these. These are the men who really rule in all localities, in all undertakings, in all combinations; and it was over these that Lord Palmerston possessed unequalled and marvellous influence".

Early in the following spring Bagehot made friends with one who was a typical example of the "careful, quiet, practical" Englishman (Bagehot's description of Lord Palmerston's admirers), though distinguished on important lines apart from most Englishmen. Bagehot had previously met Lord Avebury (then Sir John Lubbock) frequently in the City, but it was in February, 1866, that they first became intimate.

Diary, 15th February, narrates: "Walter and I dined at Mr. Greg's and met Sir John and Lady Lubbock, the Froudes, Henrys, Brodhursts, and Dr. Martineau," and on the 17th, "Walter and I went to Chiselhurst afternoon where we found Sir John Lubbock's carriage and drove to High Elms to stay with him and Lady Lubbock. Four brothers were there, Mr. Fergusson, and others." 18th. "Walter walked with Sir John Lubbock and Mr. Fergusson to a Roman camp afternoon. Mr. Hurst, the mathematician, and Mr. Herbert Spencer joined the house party. Sir John showed us his collection of flint implements."

Concern in certain lines of science having been early awakened in Bagehot through intercourse with his relative Dr. Prichard, he soon found subjects of mutual interest with Lord Avebury beyond banking. In one respect there was a notable similarity in their natures. Both were remarkable for great kindliness of disposition; both were essentially *human* in their sympathies in a very marked degree.[1]

[1] Lord Avebury was about to write an appreciation of Walter Bagehot to appear in this Memoir when he was attacked by his last illness. He

In June, 1866, Lord Russell's Government was beaten on the Reform Bill. The week after the Queen accepted his resignation and Lord Derby came in. In the *Economist* of 10th November, 1866, Bagehot wrote, "Ought the Tories to touch a Reform Bill". He was distinctly of opinion that they ought not to touch a Reform Bill. In February, 1867, Lord Derby's Government brought forward their proposals on Reform, and in the same week Bagehot's friend Lord Carnarvon, and also Lord Cranbourne, resigned office.

Notwithstanding Manchester's discouraging verdict Bagehot's friends in Somerset pressed him to stand for Bridgwater in the summer of 1866. On May 3rd he saw Mr. Brand and settled to do so. Deputations arrived at Upper Belgrave Street from the borough, and Bagehot promised to come forward as the Liberal candidate when the writ was issued, but not before. Bagehot's friend Mr. Kinglake, the author of *Eothen*, and others who knew him well in Somerset, came to London to talk over electioneering matters with him, and he certainly became interested in the prospects which were decidedly favourable to him. The writ was issued on 31st May, and Bagehot travelled down to Bridgwater on 1st June, where, the diary says, "He was met by 4000 people, banners and four grey horses, and addressed the people from the carriage". Here, among his own people, he was supported with enthusiasm, and Mr. Hutton writes, "was completely at his ease, and his canvass and public speeches were decided successes". But it was not to be. Diary, 6th June: "Nomination at Bridgwater election. Show of hands given in Mr. Patton's (the Conservative candidate's) favour. The Mayor a Tory. 7th June. Poll at Bridgwater—

wrote on 14th January, 1913, from High Elms: "Dear Mrs. Barrington, I doubt if I can send you anything worthy of Bagehot, for whom, as you know, I had great admiration and much affection, but I will try. . . . Bagehot and I met so frequently that we always discussed matters *viva voce*, and I am now sorry that that was so, as the result is that I have no letters from him of any public interest. I am very glad you are writing his life. His friendship was a great privilege."

8.15 a.m.	Bagehot	29
	Patton	14
10.15	Bagehot	230
	Patton	197
4.	Patton	301
	Bagehot	294

Walter lost by 7."

On Mr. Patton being appointed Lord Advocate a few weeks later, he had to be re-elected and lost the seat, Mr. Vanderbeyl beating him by a majority of thirty-seven. In 1868 Bagehot had written in the *Economist* on the Bribery Debate in the House of Commons, and later an article on "The True Way to Prevent Bribery". In the following spring—the General Election having taken place in the late autumn of 1868—Mr. Kinglake and Mr. Vanderbeyl were unseated for bribery at Bridgwater by Mr. Justice Blackburne, who reported that corrupt practices extensively prevailed in that borough. In October, 1869, Commissioners were sent down to Bridgwater to inquire into this corrupt state of things. A tragic incident occurred, connected with accusations made against candidates who had stood for the borough, which pointed somewhat to the necessity of the Commission being held. The Bagehots were abroad at the time but immediately returned to England, and Walter wrote to the Bridgwater Commissioners asking to be examined, and on 13th October he gave his evidence. Mr. Hutton writes: "His examination before the Commissioners was a great success. He not only entirely defeated the somewhat eagerly pressed efforts of one of the Commissioners, Mr. Anstey, to connect him with the bribery, but he drew a most amusing picture of the bribable electors whom he had seen only to shun.

"'42,018 (Mr. Anstey). Speaking from your experience of those streets, when you went down them canvassing, did any of the people say anything to you, or in your hearing, about money?—Yes, one, I recollect, standing at the door who said, "I won't vote for gentlefolks unless they do something for I. Gentlefolks do not come to I unless they do something of I, and I won't do nothing for gentlefolks, unless they do

something for me." Of course, I immediately retired out of that house.

"'42,019. That man did not give you his promise?—I retired immediately; he stood in the doorway sideways, as these rustics do.

"'42,020. Were there many such instances?—One or two, I remember. One suggested that I might have "a place". I immediately retired from him.

"'42,021. Did anybody of a better class than these voters, privately, of course, expostulate with you against your resolution to be pure?—No, nobody ever came to me at all.

"'42,022. But those about you, did any of them say anything of this kind: "Mr. Bagehot, you are quite wrong in putting purity of principles forward. It will not do if the other side bribes"?—I might have been told that I should be unsuccessful in the stream of conversation; many people may have told me that; that is how I gathered that if the other side was impure and we were pure, I should be beaten.

"'42,023. Can you remember the names of any who told you that?—No, I cannot, but I dare say I was told by as many as twenty people, and we went upon that entire consideration.'"

"In his address to the Bridgwater Constituency," again writes Mr. Hutton, "he criticised most happily the sort of bribery which ultimately resulted in the disfranchisement of the place. 'I can make allowance,' he said, 'for the poor voter; he is most likely ill-educated, certainly ill-off, and a little money is a nice treat to him. What he does is wrong, but it is intelligible. What I do not understand is the position of the rich, respectable, virtuous members of a party which countenances these things. They are like the man who stole stinking fish; they commit a crime, and they get no benefit.'" After the Commission was over Bagehot writes to Mr. Hutton: "You will like to hear that my reputation for ability is much raised at Bridgwater since my examination. They say, 'Ah! Mr. Bagehot was too many for them. They broke Westropp but they could not break him.' They regard it as a kind of skill, independent of fact or truth. 'You win

if you are clever, and you lose if you are stupid,' is their idea at bottom.

"Constantine Prichard is dead, leaving a large family not well off, I fear. The old world of our youth breaks up, and the *best* people get the *worst* of it."

In the autumn of 1866, the year of the Bridgwater election, Walter's mother became very ill—so ill that she had to leave home. Walter went down at once to see her at the doctor's house to which she had been taken. When his father failed in his endeavours to help her Walter often succeeded. On a second visit he found her very depressed physically as well as mentally. He saw Dr. Symonds, the famous adviser in mental cases, who gave his approval to Mrs. Bagehot being moved to Sidmouth. Walter and my sister changed the plans they had made to go elsewhere, and Walter met his mother at Bristol and took her to Sidmouth, and Mr. Bagehot and my sister arrived there the same day. This plan of Walter's was entirely successful, his mother becoming quite reasonable in mind and well in body under these more cheerful conditions. Underlying the strenuous active life which Bagehot was habitually leading, two realities acted as magnets to the deeper feelings of his nature—the home trouble, and the desire to express in literature the rich crop of ideas ever germinating in his brain. Compared to these, other interests seemed to him tame.

Yet another attempt was made by Bagehot's friends in 1867 to secure a seat for him in the House of Commons. Mr. Hutton was in this case the moving spirit, and the seat was the University of London. A very long list of influential supporters was printed and circulated with the following letter from Walter Bagehot which served as an address to the electors :—

"Unquestionably we are on the eve of a great change in our politics. Our University is the most considerable creation —I was about to say the only considerable creation—of the 'Parliament of 1832'. The labours of that Parliament have been excellent and fruitful ; but by far the greater part of them were labours of demolition. It found a great heritage of bad

laws, and it was energetic in repealing them. But most of those laws are gone. And upon that account we every day hear middle-aged politicians say that 'everything great has already been carried, and that the new Parliament will have nothing to do'. I am sure that this is a mistake. The work of demolition (though not complete) is more than half over, but the work of reconstruction is yet to begin. Our work is more difficult, more delicate, more gradual, perhaps, than that of our fathers; they had mostly to pull down that they knew to be evil; we have tentatively and slowly to erect what we hope will be good.

"The very name of our University of itself suggests the greatest and most urgent of our tasks. Thirty years ago we founded a University for an excluded class; now we have to frame, upon the very same principles, an education which will suit the whole nation. Our University has shown upon what principles a sound and sensible culture can be given to young men sincerely bred in different religious creeds, without sacrificing either the faith to the culture or the culture to the faith. For myself, I believe that the experiment is capable of indefinite development. The sudden extension of the franchise is one of those facts 'of the first magnitude' which are never long resisted. After the first Reform Act the cry was, 'Register! Register! Register!' The cry should now be, 'Educate! Educate! Educate!' The State will have to intervene far more widely than is as yet thought ere the problem of wide education in a mixed society is solved, and before the principles of our University are developed to their proper limit.

"The now secure predominance of popular power must greatly mitigate our traditional jealousy of the Executive Government. The English State is but another name for the English people, and to be afraid of it, is to be alarmed at ourselves. From countless causes the age of great cities requires a strong government. The due extension of the functions of the State in superintending the health and in lessening the vice and misery of our large towns must receive speedy attention from a Parliament in which most of the inhabitants of those towns are for the first time directly represented.

"The co-operative, if not the compulsory agency, of the State ought, too, to be used far more than now in applying to our complicated society those results of science which are new to this age, and in aiding such investigations as require combined and costly effort, lasting, perhaps, a long time, and distributed over many countries. The relation of a free and intelligent Government to practical science is a new subject, because such science is very modern, and such Government almost inconceivably rare.

"But there yet remain 'organic' questions which are not as yet set at rest. We have still not only to discuss how we shall use our Government, but also, in part at least, what shall be the shape and structure of our Government. Few indeed will at once again wish—I certainly should not wish—to alter the franchise, but the size and place of our constituencies have now been altered just enough to upset old prestige and not enough to satisfy new events. The growing North of England has still far too little weight as compared with the stationary South, and whatever may once have been the uses of little boroughs, they will now become wretched nests of dangerous corruption, which will introduce into Parliament no remarkable mind and represent there no peculiar interests. A statesman should sweep away such pernicious remnants of an extinct organisation, and seek a modern substitute capable of the useful function which they once performed.

"I fear the abolition of these boroughs will cost much time and many quarrels. Corruption is costly, and it dies hard.

"But another subject more fruitful of strife yet remains. In Ireland we still maintain a Church of one religion, though the country is of a different religion. The pretence of its being a missionary Church has now been given up. Its advocates have not yet answered the question of Sir Robert Peel, 'Do you think you can claim a balance of three hundred converts in three hundred years?' The Irish Church is no longer supported by argument, and only lives from day to day because the old school of Liberal politicians never forget that they once hurt their party by endeavouring to touch it. But a better day is, I hope, beginning. A new, and therefore more impulsive, Parliament will sweep away the cobwebs of old politicians.

The last Liberal Government gave to Ireland the benefit of a University just like our own; let us hope that comparatively small gift may be the beginning of a wiser mode of dealing with her highest and best interests.

"The first duty, in my judgment, of the next Parliament will be to restore Mr. Gladstone to power. He is the natural leader of the Liberal party, and if the Reform Act be a true improvement, it will strengthen the progressive mind of Parliament and augment the Liberal party. I believe that, in spite of the present triumphs of subterfuge and artifice, Mr. Gladstone will return to power. His wonderful gifts have already charmed the nation. In amplitude of knowledge, in intensity of labour, in a flexible eloquence suited either to the highest discussions or to the meanest details of public business, he has no living equal; and it is no light matter that he will lead the House of Commons with an eager and noble morality which tends to raise it and awaken all the nation."

Again, however, it was not to be. The University of London chose Mr. Robert Lowe as her member, and from that time Bagehot gave up all idea of entering Parliament.

The following year the Liberal party in Somerset, especially the voters in Yeovil, were very desirous that Bagehot should stand for the county, but he declined doing so. In the *Economist* of 7th February, 1874, Bagehot wrote on "The Advantages and Disadvantages of becoming a Member of Parliament". He enumerates the advantages, but concludes by saying there is a good deal to be said on the other side.

The great financial crisis took place in May, 1866. Bagehot in the first leader of the *Economist* of 12th May writes: "The failure of Overend, Gurney & Co. has given occasion to a panic more suitable to their historical than to their recent reputation". Dated 11th May are notes by Walter Bagehot written to Mr. Gladstone and preserved by him marked "W. Bagehot on the City Crisis".

"A complete collapse of credit in Lombard Street and a greater amount of anxiety than I have ever seen. Large orders for notes are sent from the country by country Bankers and the notes are going down this evening.

"The English Joint Stock Bank has failed. It is small, but it has scattered branches in different localities and there are demands for notes for each locality.

"The Banks are said to have discounted largely to-day, and this would tend to reduce their reserve, but if the notes do not go into the country, they will come in again.

"There is much foreign money in London invested in bills, many due in May; I fear this money will be withdrawn from a general apprehension that English credit is not to be relied on.—W. Bagehot, 11th May."

"We may congratulate our readers," he writes in the *Economist* of 19th May, "and we own that we rejoice ourselves that the Friday on which we write is not like last Friday. Last week, Lombard Street looked more like a country fair than its usual self; most people were asking—Will the Act be broken? What will Mr. Gladstone do?" Mr. Gladstone suspended the Bank Charter Act, and Bagehot writes further in the same article: "The whole mercantile community quite assents to the infraction of the Act; indeed, if it had not been broken this month, it would have been repealed next. The matter resembled what Mr. Lowe so happily said of the cattle plague report. He remarked that all the press wrote down the recommendations of the Commissioners, but the disease 'took the matter' into its own hands and showed that they were right. Just so the 'panic' took the matter into its own hands and proved that the Act could be no longer maintained,—proved it not to theoretical minds or by fine argument, but to the great bulk of ordinary men, and by the palpable argument which strikes the massive common sense of the world."

Bagehot wrote lengthily on the panic in the *Economist*, and the following to Mr. Gladstone:—

"12 Upper Belgrave Street, S.W.,
"21*st May*, 1866.

"You said to me a few days since that you thought late events proved the necessity of legislation as to the country issues, and I am not prepared to deny the truth of the observa-

tion or at all to contend that the country as a nation is in a fit state abstractedly ; but at the same time I very much wish to bring before you what I think is the true relation of the country issues to the late panic, as it is a little different from what the first appearance of the facts might suggest.

"I have no doubt at all that the panic of last Friday week was 80 per cent. at least of a deposit panic and not more than 20 per cent of a note panic. I believe I might use with truth figures debiting even more to the deposits and less to the issues. In my own mind I doubt if 5 per cent. was owing to the issues. My reasons are :—

"1st. That Banks *not* of circulation supplied themselves on the whole as much as Banks of circulation. The National Provincial, which now has no notes of its own, took down, I know, half a million to their various branches, and a great deal went to the north of England to districts where no notes but those of the Bank of England ever circulate.

"2ndly. That the magnitude of the deposit liability is now-a-days so enormously greater than that of the note liability that in a panic provision it is much more thought of. I cannot doubt that the country deposits are much more than thirty times the country issues, and naturally the idea of the greater in time of fear a good deal absorbs the less.

"3rdly. I believe that in the present day the note liability is a less delicate liability and less liable to be affected by distant events than that for deposits. In the recent *very* severe drain on Gurney's Bank in Norfolk—one of the heaviest, I apprehend, that any country bank ever successfully met—almost the whole demand was for the deposits. And theory would suggest that this was likely. A considerable number of depositors has sums of considerable value to them at their bankers of which the loss would be inconvenient, and even a momentary non-payment disagreeable. But no ordinary educated person now-a-days holds notes to any such amounts. Nobody would care if he could not pass the £10 or £5 which is all he ever possesses in notes. Years ago large hoards of notes existed, the savings of rural districts were largely held in them, and in those days a note drain was more fearful than a deposit

drain. Such events too as have recently occurred affect more the minds of the richer class than those of the poorer. Of those, if I may say so, *above* the banking line—the line at which people begin to keep bank accounts—than *below* the banking line. The poorer people in Somersetshire never heard of Overends or Peto and they do not care for their failure. But all depositors almost have heard of them and it might not unreasonably be expected that they might care.

"There are still some little hoards of notes about £20 or £30 each about among dairymen and other little people. But this is a very opaque class, and though they might cause a secondary run sometimes after the primary, they would almost certainly be too late for the latter.

"I am very sorry to have written at such length, but I wished to show fully the reasons for my opinion such as it is. If it is true, it is important, because it follows that almost the whole of the late panic, and the suspension of Peel's Act, would have taken place, if there had been no country issues and if the whole circulation of the country had been supplied either by the Bank of England or by the State."

According to his custom, Bagehot did not preserve the answer to this letter, but on the 28th May a note which Mr. Gladstone did preserve runs: "Might I breakfast with you on Thursday next, as you were so kind as to ask me?" and the discussion was doubtless concluded *viva voce*. In this way it will be seen Bagehot often guided the actions and the opinions of Chancellors of the Exchequer. He not only gave them reliable information on City affairs but helped to guide their judgment in taking action on the events.

Other officers of State also knew that the *Economist* was Bagehot, and not unfrequently interceded with him when they wanted his help in guiding public opinion.

In July, Mr. Charles Villiers wrote confidentially to Bagehot enclosing "a memorandum relating to the memorable Poor Law Bill which after much difficulty has just passed the House of Commons, but which is now probably in jeopardy in the House of Lords owing to the same interested objects that obstructed its progress in the Commons". Having seen

"a very able notice of this Bill in the *Economist* as far back as April last recommending its enactment strongly," Mr. Villiers expressed a hope that Bagehot would insert, if he thought right, "a few lines in the paper favourable to the measure, believing it would be of use while the Bill was under discussion in the Lords."

Again Mr. Charles Villiers writes at the time of the American War and the consequent distress in Ireland :—

"I do not know if any notice will be taken in the *Economist* of Lancashire distress this week, but, in case there should be, I merely send this document, which was prepared for the Cabinet only, that any figures might be corrected by it if that was thought worth while. The reason why it was not deemed expedient to make it public as official at present, is, that as we are as uncertain as ever about the termination of the war, it is *not* an object that the subscriptions to the Distress should cease, and the account here given would lead people to think that we now have *enough*—which we have till March next no doubt! but will the distress end then? Perhaps you will have the goodness to let me have it back after examining it, which, as it is quite correct, you might wish to do.

"I remain,

"Yours very truly,

"C. P. VILLIERS."

Lord Granville concluded a confidential letter he wrote to Bagehot on 11th October, 1870, by these words :—

"May I ask you in anything you say, which always comes with so much weight both from the high character of your paper and the great ability of the articles, not to write anything which will give thoughtful Germans reason to believe that they have just cause of complaint against us. You will believe me when I say the request is exclusively on public grounds.

"Yours sincerely,

"GRANVILLE."

CHAPTER XIV.

"PHYSICS AND POLITICS."

In the autumn of 1867, Walter and my sister made a tour in North Devon and Cornwall, revisiting places he imagined in childhood to be the most beautiful in the world. From Boscastle he wrote a letter to the *Spectator*. In the autumn of 1868 he and my sister spent August and September in the Pyrenees, and from San Sebastian Bagehot sent another letter to the *Spectator* enthusiastically praising the country and the charm of living under the "Golden Light" of the southern sun. "This north-west corner of Spain," he wrote, "is the only place out of England where I should like to live. It is a sort of better Devonshire; the coast is of the same kind, the sun is more brilliant, the sea is more brilliant, and there are mountains in the background. I have seen more beautiful places and many grander, but I should not like to live in them. As Mr. Emerson puts it, 'I do not want to go to heaven before my time'. My English nature by early use and long habit is tied to a certain kind of scenery, soon feels the want of it, and is apt to be alarmed as well as pleased at perpetual snow and all sorts of similar beauties. But here, about San Sebastian, you have the best England can give you (at least if you hold, as I do, that Devonshire is the finest of our counties), and the charm, the ineffable, indescribable charm of the South too. Probably the sun has some secret effect on the nervous system that makes one inclined to be pleased, but the golden light lies upon everything, and one fancies that one is charmed only by the outward loveliness."

It was while under the spell of this charm that letters arrived from two of Bagehot's friends, Mr. Chichester Fortescue, (Lord Carlingford) and Mr. A. E. Freeman, the historian, begging him to stand for Mid-Somerset. More than ever,

while basking in a southern clime, did he feel disinclined to enter into political or any other conflict; moreover, knowing Somerset as he did, he saw no chance of the Liberals coming in on the Disestablishment of the Irish Church question. He wrote declining to stand, but on his return to Somerset in October he took an active part in helping Mr. Freeman and the other Liberal candidate. He attended their meetings at Glastonbury and took the chair at a Liberal meeting at Langport. Before the election, while in London, he had an attack of his old complaint, but sufficiently recovered from it to go to Herd's Hill for the polling day.

While in London, Bagehot was informed of an incident which had occurred with reference to his standing for Mid-Somerset, and which was the subject of the following letter from him to Mr. Gladstone, dated Windham Club, 19th October, 1868. "Mr. Glyn has just asked me to call in Parliament Street, and has shown me a most extraordinary telegram sent to you from Yeovil in which my name has been used. I cannot conceive its meaning, but much regret that I should have been brought before you in such a ridiculous way.

"I was asked to stand for Mid-Somerset some time ago when I was abroad, and declined, as I have not enough recovered from the illness I had earlier in the year to be equal to such a contest. I only arrived in England three or four days ago, and I have not yet been in the West of England, so what the Yeovil people meant by troubling you I cannot think. I hope you were only amused at such an expression of electioneering zeal."

The said telegram arrived at Hawarden on a Sunday morning when Mr. Gladstone was in church, and his servant took it to him there. Its import was to beg Mr. Gladstone to induce Walter Bagehot to stand at the coming election. There was undoubtedly no lack of zeal in his countrymen in Somerset to secure him a seat, however little zeal he may have felt himself.

Diary. "30th November, 1868. Mr. Bagehot and Walter drove morning to the polling for Mid-Somerset at Somerton and were much cheered. Defeat of Liberal canditate by 1,550

votes. Mr. Neville Grenville and Mr. Paget therefore elected." In the previous week Mr. Gladstone had been thrown out in the contest for South-West Lancashire. His pamphlet *A Chapter of an Autobiography* had just appeared, on which Bagehot wrote a fine and subtly reasoned-out paper for the *Economist.*

"Mr. Gladstone's account of his change of opinion on the subject of the Irish Church," he writes, "is full of character, both intellectual and moral. The intellectual interest lies in the curious process by which the very substance of his present creed on the relation of Church to State is developed from that minute germ of *exception* to his former creed which he stated to Lord Macaulay in 1839. The moral interest lies partly in the delicate and scrupulous honour by which Mr. Gladstone guarded himself from the danger of succumbing to mere self-interested motives, and partly in the evidence that his intellect was completely moulded into his present opposite views by causes infinitely more powerful than any self-interested motives could possibly have exerted over his mind—namely, that sympathy with the growing political freedom of the day which compelled him year by year to assign an ever-increasing importance to influences wholly unprovided for in his early creed and yet clamorously demanding recognition in any practical view of the future relations between Church and State."

The elections went against the Government, and the Queen telegraphed for Mr. Gladstone, who was at Hawarden when this summons to Windsor arrived. On Mr. Disraeli taking the town by surprise and resigning at once after the elections had gone against him, Bagehot wrote in the *Economist:* "Mr. Disraeli's resignation is a singularly graceful act. We were about to go through a laborious formality of which every one knew the end, but which every one fancied to be necessary. From meetings, declarations, and pledges—binding because new—it was certain what the judgment of Parliament on the late Ministry would be, and to require that Parliament should go through long nights and long speeches to register the decision was childish. Mr. Disraeli has many defects but he has one merit; when he means a thing he knows how to do it.

He has saved the nation the painful spectacle of a solemn farce by not waiting to be ejected when they knew he must go . . . Mr. Disraeli's resignation is, as we have said, most good and excellent; nevertheless, those who know what the power of the Crown once was in England, and how much it has declined even during the present reign, will have read with a curious interest Mr. Disraeli's 'memorandum' in the *Times*. We should like to know what George IV. or even William IV. would have said to the announcement of his resignation in a newspaper before his successor had reached Windsor. To George III. the idea would have been incredible. 'No Minister,' he would have said, 'could commit such an indiscretion. If he did, he must be for ever excluded from public circles.' Yet such is the change of times, not any one now notices the incongruity or much thinks of the Queen in the matter."

Though Bagehot's health had from boyhood been delicate he was attacked by the first serious illness of his life in December, 1867, when he was forty-two years of age.

Returning on Christmas Eve from the midnight service at St. Alban's, Holborn, he caught a chill which developed into a severe attack of internal inflammation. Our old friend of Westbury and Claverton days, Mr. Orby Shipley, was working at that time with Mr. Maconochie at St. Albans, and about to become engaged to be married to my sister Zoë.

Diary. "Zoë and Matilda went to Vespers at St. Albans at 8 o'clock with Mr. Orby Shipley. Walter and Emmie joined them for the midnight Mass, which was very beautiful."

Walter's illness was very persistent; great weakness followed, and serious relapses recurred during January and February. While he was laid up he was visited often by Mr. Hutton and other friends, among them Sir John Lubbock, Matthew Arnold, Mr. Forster and Mr. Sanford. He felt often two weak even to read—the first time in his life when he had found himself unable to do so. He managed nevertheless to write a letter to Mr. Hutton to be forwarded to the graduates of the London University on the Disestablishment of the Irish Church and on Education generally.

When he had sufficiently recovered to travel, he and my sister went to spend a month with his parents at Herd's Hill, and on 24th March moved on to Lyme Regis, a place immortalised by Miss Austen in *Persuasion*. It was from the curious jetty which forms a breakwater called *The Cobb* that the wilful Louisa insisted on jumping down and, alighting on her head, lost consciousness, and thereby complicated the situation. To Lyme Regis, Lord and Lady Chatham would frequently drive from Burton Pynsent, and their eldest son, the second Lord Chatham, studied there with a retired officer of the army.

Diary. "We left Langport 3 for Lyme Regis, stopped at Axminster for tea and to write letters, sending off revise of second number *Physics and Politics* for *Fortnightly Review*. Reached Lyme Regis at 7. 27th March. We drove to Axminster before lunch to send the Money Article for *Economist*."

Even at Lyme Regis, Walter continued to have slight relapses. He never, in fact, fully regained the strength he lost by this illness, and he found it necessary to engage an assistant editor to aid him in the work for the *Economist*. He was most fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Robert Giffen (Sir Robert Giffen) who, in every sense, proved to be the right person for the post.[1] Sir Robert Giffen's writings on Bagehot after his death prove that he had justly estimated the powers of his chief and had discerned the ever-expanding quality of Bagehot's genius.

Two marriages in our family took place in the summer of 1868. On 9th June, in St. Albans Church, Holborn, my sister Zoë was married to Orby Shipley, and on 1st July in

[1] Sir Robert Giffen gave valuable help to Mr. Hutton in editing the *Economic Studies*, the work Bagehot did not live to complete. In the Prefatory note Mr. Hutton writes of "the most valuable help of Mr. Robert Giffen, the head of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, who, during the last years of Mr. Bagehot's life, had a better knowledge of his economic mind than any other person. . . . It only remains for me to express my hearty gratitude to Mr. Giffen for his willing and most important help, without which I should have felt no little hesitation in deciding on the true sequence of some passages in this volume."

St. Peter's, Eaton Square, I was married to Russell Barrington. Walter fathered both events, taking all the trouble of the business arrangements upon himself, and also "giving us away".[1]

The week after our wedding Walter and my sister came to stay with us at Sonning on the Thames where we were passing our honeymoon in the old Manor House, where fuchsias and old-fashioned flowers grew tall in the garden. We rowed most of the day on the river. On our first Sunday there we walked along its bank with Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, who was intimate with some members of the Barrington family. He had preached in the morning at the Sonning Church, and scolded the farmers, I remember, for always grumbling at the weather.

Once the acute stage of his illness over, Bagehot wrote much during the year 1868. Besides continuing the chapters of *Physics and Politics*, and writing an article entitled "Matthew Arnold on the London University" for the *Fortnightly Review*, his pen was prolific in utterances in the *Economist* on questions which came before the House during the spring, summer and autumn sessions, and on International Coinage. On the disestablishment of the Irish Church, the subject of the letter he wrote to the graduates of the London University while he was ill, he felt strongly. In the House of Commons, the struggle for and against was chiefly sustained by speeches from Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli. In the House of Lords, according to Bagehot, Lord Carnarvon made the really great speech on the question. The article which appeared in

[1] Whenever Walter was on the scene, and whatever the occurrence might be, some funny little incident would happen connected with him which tickled the fancy and gave a welcome quaint flavour to the solemnities. Such incidents remain fixed fast in the memory whatever else is forgotten. On the day of my marriage, after returning from the church, we (the bride and bridegroom) retired with Walter into his study to sign our wills and eat a quiet luncheon, there being at the breakfast a vast assemblage of relations and old friends. The wills, however, were not forthcoming. Walter had had charge of them, but at the critical moment could not produce them. Ultimately they emerged from the butler's pantry. "The wills are found," he said. "They went down to be brushed with my evening clothes."

the *Economist* on this speech supplies the clue that explains the strong attachment which Bagehot and Lord Carnarvon had for one another, though their political views were not the same. Both possessed that quality of mind ascribed to Bagehot by Matthew Arnold—"a concern for the simple truth," and such purity of aim eliminated in both any partiality tainted by self or party interest. It raised debate from the level where it is weighted by prejudice to that inspired by moral and intellectual insight. Of Lord Carnarvon's speech on the Disestablishment of the Irish Church,[1] Bagehot writes: "Only Lord Carnarvon's speech had the clear impress of perfect impartiality and deliberate consideration, as well as great ability; he alone spoke in the tone of an umpire who admitted the full force even of those arguments the guidance of which he nevertheless could not accept because he felt the *greater* force of those of the opposite drift. The regret Lord Carnarvon expressed that 'there should be anything like an appearance of party action,' because 'Ireland learns, as she has learned on previous occasions, that she apparently gains more by partisanship and vehemence than she does by the wisdom of the Imperial Legislature,' is a very just matter for regret. Unfortunately, it is one which almost uniformly results from party government, because no wholesome reform has any chance unless it is taken up warmly by one or other of the two parties, and nothing, as a rule, is taken up warmly by either of the two parties, unless it is a battle-cry against the other.

". . . Lord Carnarvon is quite right in saying that it is very material alloy of any good which Mr. Gladstone's policy may effect, that it teaches Ireland how much more she can gain from 'partisanship' than by the impartial conscientiousness of Parliament. Nor was Lord Carnarvon less wise in rejecting the idea that this disestablishment of the Protestant Church in Ireland will be any panacea to remove Irish discontent. That it will remove *some* widespread discontent, that it will give an earnest of our wish to be just, we of course believe. But it is most true that it will leave us 'face to face

[1] See *Economist*, 4th July, 1868.

with still larger and more important social questions'. And if we shrink from acknowledging this,—if we allow ourselves to suppose for a moment that the Irish difficulty would be surmounted when the National property is taken away from the Church of a small minority, we should be making this concession of practice an intellectual mischief to ourselves, and a source of bitter disappointment afterwards. It is only by those who clearly define to themselves what may fairly be expected, and what *cannot* fairly be expected from this change, that the true advantage can be taken of the step which Mr. Gladstone proposes, and which the House of Peers has refused to take. Again, we think it is equally true that we must deduct, as Lord Carnarvon bids us, from the advantages of what we are doing, the *tendency* to diminish loyalty amongst the section of the population which is now the only heartily loyal section, and *perhaps* also the tendency (though of this we are much more doubtful) to favour Ultramontane tactics which this apparent victory of theirs may produce. All these admissions of Lord Carnarvon's, so far from diminishing the weight of his conclusion, give it tenfold force, because they show how truly and honestly he had weighed the real reasons against it. His exposition of the reasons *for* the Bill was less elaborate, because in fact the reasons are so very simply."

In answer to a letter Bagehot wrote congratulating him on his speech, Lord Carnarvon wrote: "Your very kind note was most welcome. There is no one whose opinion I value so highly, and—being greatly dissatisfied as I was—with what I said on Monday night, I was proportionately pleased with the view that you took of my speech."

The year 1869 began by Walter being summoned on 2nd January to Langport to help his father in the home trouble. He was ailing himself often during this year, and in March went to Weston-super-Mare to seek health. He never however ceased work.

In April he wrote an article on "The Indian Budget" praising Sir Richard Temple, then Indian Chancellor of the Exchequer, for his courage in having insisted that the income tax, which my father had in the first instance imposed, should

not be taken off, though it was very unpopular. Bagehot writes: "It is a wise tax, because it accustoms the people to the only form of demand which can be relied on in an emergency, and helps to remedy the great economical evil of India, the comparative exemption of the wealthy from taxation. It is no doubt very unpopular, but it will be least unpopular while it is so low, and Sir R. Temple has shown a true courage in facing the unpopularity when he had not the excuse of absolute necessity, but saw his way to do a great service to the State."

On the death of Lord Derby, in the autumn of 1869, Bagehot wrote an instructive article in the *Economist* which, like those on Lord Herbert, Cobden, Lord Palmerston, Lord Brougham, gave in less than two columns of the paper an epitome of Lord Derby's career, his special powers, the place he held in his own party, and the peculiar merits which secured for him the leadership of that party.

Bagehot's articles in the *Economist* on Statesmen had a special value at the moment they were written. They gave to current events an historic importance. The exact reason why famous politicians are famous is apt to be a somewhat vague quantity in the public mind. A column or two in the *Economist* by Bagehot dispels this vagueness and gives an epitome of a career on comprehensive lines, but in so concise a form that it lodges firmly in the memory. For instance—Lord Palmerston dies and he explains the particular place he held among great politicians by meeting the exact requirements of our national character, and Bagehot emphasises this national character with extreme ability. Lord Brougham dies, and by giving a graphic description of the "misused trial time of the Tory party in England" from 1815 to 1832, Bagehot shows how such conditions gave "'Henry Brougham,' as men used to call him," his chance and developed his special gifts.[1]

In the end of July, 1869, Walter was again ill, but did not

[1] Bagehot had more exhaustively treated the character and career of Lord Brougham eleven years previously, in his essay in the *National Review*.

lie up. He was brave—indeed rash in the treatment of his own health : unless absolutely obliged he never gave in, and but most rarely gave up working. Diary. "1st August. Walter very poorly—saw Dr. Garrod, small dinner-party at home. Mr. Charles Villiers, Sir Frederick Peel, Sir Richard Temple, and Mr. Somerset Beaumont. 3rd August. Walter still at home poorly. He saw Mr. Giffen and Mr. Somerset Beaumont in his room." On the 4th of August he was out again, and on the 5th my sister left London for Spa with my mother and sister Julia to take the baths, it being arranged that Walter should join her later to make a tour in Germany. However, a week after she had left I received a telegram—"I am ill—will you come and nurse me". My husband and I were staying in Hertfordshire with my father-in-law at Watton Rectory. It was ten o'clock, and we were at family prayers, I remember, when the alarming telegram arrived. My husband started at once, but only arrived at Upper Belgrave Street at five o'clock next morning. I followed by earliest train next day. We found Walter very ill and all the best-known doctors away taking their holidays. However my husband secured Dr. Garrod's understudy. Walter was a delightful patient, always good company, though often in great pain. I read poetry to him and he dictated his *Economist* articles to me. They came out with great ease, and though so ill, it seemed no difficulty to him to use his mind. As soon as he could be moved, we took him to our house on Wimbledon Common. He was still very weak, but took drives on the Common which revived him, and by the end of a month from the time this serious illness began, he was able to join my sister at Ostend. Diary. "30th August. I left Spa at 11.30. Mamma, J. and M. saw me off. Spent seventeen hours in waiting-room at Brussels and reached Ostend at 8. Found Walter at the Hotel de Prusse on the shore, looking very delicate after his month's illness." Instead of taking the intended tour in Germany the Bagehots returned to England, for Walter to give his evidence at Bridgwater, where the Bribery Commission was sitting.

CHAPTER XV.

"LOMBARD STREET."

In 1870 the house in Upper Belgrave Street was given up and the Bagehots moved for three years to The Poplars on Wimbledon Common where my husband and I were living.

Early in the year an event occurred of great import in Walter Bagehot's life. Though Mrs. Bagehot had been suffering from an attack of influenza, her death was quite unexpected. Without pain or any consciousness of the approaching end, she died peacefully at Herd's Hill in the night of 21st February. The news was telegraphed to The Poplars in the morning after Walter had left for London. My sister forwarded the telegram and he returned at once. My husband had started from Wimbledon by a later train, and met Walter on the platform of Cannon Street Station on his return journey to The Poplars. The news had come to him as a staggering blow. He looked scared, my husband said, and his eyes wild. He exclaimed briefly, as if astonished at the sound of his own words—"My mother is dead". The great space she had filled in his life for joy and for pain, and the idea that it was all over, stunned him. It was difficult for him to realise life without all that her existence had meant to him. Besides his strong natural affection, a special tenderness towards her had been engendered owing to the great pity he had felt for her. Since he had grown to manhood the relationship between himself and his mother had become somewhat reversed. His had become almost a feeling of motherly care and anxiety—hers one of dependence on his affection and the strength of his judgment. Hardly ever was the idea quite absent from his mind that she might at any moment be wanting him. On returning from her funeral I remember his saying, "The *worst* of it is, that by many it was looked on as a relief". Strangely

pathetic to him was the idea that such an event should appear in the light of a *relief* to any one, and yet no one knew better than Walter how natural it was that those who had not loved her should entertain such an idea. "It looks a very desolate home without her," poor Mr. Bagehot said in greeting my sister on her first coming to Herd's Hill after Mrs. Bagehot's death. For some months both Mr. Bagehot's and Walter's health appears to have been affected by their loss. In February and in April Mr. Bagehot was very ill and Walter was constantly ailing. On the other hand, the strain on Walter's nerves occasioned by his mother's attacks was relaxed, and he felt a sense of freedom that had not been possible up till then.

It was about this time that he became interested in the decorative art of William Morris and his school. He had a fine taste and a quick eye, and easily discerned in this work a distinguished quality which would be lastingly satisfying. Through Ruskin and Arthur Hughes, I had become acquainted with Rossetti, William Morris, and Wolner, the sculptor, and through Miss Octavia Hill, with William De Morgan[1] whose work had a special interest for Walter Bagehot he being a son of Professor De Morgan. I had not been slow in giving Walter the benefit of my raptures on the merits of the school of which these were the prophets. In order that he should

[1] Ruskin had some years previously given over his London property in Marylebone to Miss Octavia Hill, who had carried on the management of it on enlightened lines. Her sister Miranda had started the Kyrle Society, and both sisters held that to bring some beauty into the lives of the poor was no less a duty than to supply their material needs. In one courtyard in Marylebone Road they instituted May-day festivals. The houses round the court were dull and ugly-looking enough. Miss Hill planned an alleviation to this dullness in the form of a frieze of De Morgan tiles, beautiful in colour, meaning, and design, which should run round the courtyard on the front of the houses. One sunny morning she and I went to Chelsea to the old-fashioned house in Cheyne Row where Mr. De Morgan then lived and worked, to choose the decoration for this May-day festival court. We walked through the house and the workshops into the little garden where stood the one solitary kiln in which were burnt tiles and vases, epoch-making treasures in the history of English pottery. There we arranged with Mr. De Morgan for the making of the frieze. In those days he little thought of being a writer of novels.

have a larger library certain changes were being made at Herd's Hill. He and my sister decided to have this room and others, which were being renovated, hung with Morris papers and the furniture covered with leather provided by Mr. Webb who belonged to Morris's firm. We drove in from The Poplars to choose these papers in Morris's original premises in Queen's Square, Bloomsbury. The moral severity with which these prophets treated decoration and all matters of taste was not at that time quite understood in the rural districts of Somerset. The few smart houses near Herd's Hill were still decorated by second-hand French designs and white and gilt ornament. Relations and neighbours were puzzled by Walter's choice. They were inclined to think Morris papers and furniture too plain and "rather queer". From Highclere, Walter writes: "They (the Carnarvons) are doing a heap of improvements, and among others have gone into *Morrisinism*, and have done up one of the very best rooms with my paper in my study at Herd's Hill. You might throw this in my father's teeth, as he would not believe in it. They are much amused here at *my* knowing anything about it."

However, the world of Miss Austen was quickly passing by, and Mr. Bagehot resigned himself easily to any choice in such things made by Walter and my sister.

A literary friend of Bagehot's, Mr. Bernard Cracroft, was a musician and interested in all the arts. He had been a constant visitor at our house in Upper Belgrave Street. As an amateur violinist he could hardly be excelled. Joachim affirmed he was the best in Europe. He would spend whole mornings and afternoons playing duets with my sister, Mrs. Horan, who was a good amateur pianist. His literary gifts and a notable distinction in Mr. Cracroft's manners and appearance attracted Walter Bagehot, ever sensitive to "good looks," so he "excused his music". But even music itself presented a possible interest to Bagehot. From The Poplars my husband and I would go to the popular concerts at St. James's Hall, and after the concerts meet Joachim at the Cracrofts' house in Saville Row. These vivid enjoyments

were enlarged on to Walter when we returned to The Poplars. George Eliot and Mr. Lewes were very constant attendants at the popular concerts, and Walter would hear their enthusiasm on the subject of Joachim's playing when calling at The Priory. Madame Goldschmidt (Jenny Lind) lived in Wimbledon Park. She was a friendly neighbour, and at her house we met Madame Schumann. Music of the best was in the air, and Walter Bagehot never came across any interest that excited those about him without trying to understand the source of it. His mind conceived the idea that possibly he might get to understand in what consisted the great influence music possessed over many natures. Had he lived he would himself, I believe, have experienced some delight in it, as his sensibilities were singularly keen in all other directions.

He was at that time obliged to remain many days at home owing to illness, and would then ask my sister or me to drive to Smith's library at Wimbledon Station, and bring him some "easy novel, Miss Braddon or the like, not George Eliot, *that was* work". Reading, when the book read required no thought, had become a rest to him. It prevented his brain from working on his own severer subjects. For the same reason he liked to play *bézique* with my sister Mrs. Horan, or with my husband. He would generally ride in the morning, and when at home, and not ill, would drive my sister in the afternoon. Hardly a day passed but there was some intercourse between Park Lodge at one end of Wimbledon Common and The Poplars at the other end. Either Mr. Greg would come to us, or we would drop in on him as we drove to or from London. The Bagehots occasionally dined out and gave dinners in town. They would go to political evening parties, as Walter liked to hear what people had to say on current events, and at Lady Granville's, Lady Waldegrave's, Mrs. Gladstone's, Lady Maine's and Lady May's there was much to be gathered of political interest from the talk that went on; otherwise general society had no attraction for him. Old friends he saw constantly, either in London or at The Poplars, and visits to Hampstead to see his Uncle Reynolds were frequent as ever.

In October, 1870, Bagehot began writing *Lombard Street*, the book which together with *The English Constitution* and *Physics and Politics* has made his name famous. Unlike his other two complete works it did not appear in numbers. It was not published till the spring of 1873. Bagehot wrote in the "Advertisement" with which he prefaces the volume: "The composition of this little book has occupied a much longer time than, perhaps, my readers may think its length or its importance deserves. It was begun as long ago as the autumn of 1870, and though its progress has often been suspended by pressing occupations and imperfect health, I have never ceased to work at it when I could. . . . I fear that I must not expect a very favourable reception for this work. It speaks mainly of four sets of persons—the Bank of England, Joint Stock Banks other than that Bank, private bankers, and bill brokers, and I am much afraid that neither will altogether like what is said of them. I can only say that the opinions now expressed have not been formed hastily or at a distance from the facts; that, on the contrary, they have been slowly matured in Lombard Street itself, and that, perhaps, as they will not be altogether pleasing to any one, I may at least ask for the credit of having been impartial in my criticism."

As an estimate of *Lombard Street*, which may be put in the balance against these extremely modest words written by the author, are the following written by Mr. Hartley Withers, "Lombard Street in 1910," in an introduction to the edition published by Smith, Elder & Co. in 1912. "It is a wonderful achievement, that a book dealing with the shifting quicksands of the money market should still, after forty years, be a classic of which no one who wishes to understand the subject can afford to be ignorant."

Mr. Gladstone writes:—

"10 Downing Street,
"Whitehall, 16*th October*, 1873.

"My dear Mr. Bagehot,

"I hope that I sent you at the proper time an acknowledgment of your kindness in presenting to me a copy of your work happily named *Lombard Street.*

"But in my *new* capacity of Chancellor of the Exchequer I must not be content with that bare acknowledgment.

"I have now read it through attentively, and know not whether most to admire its clearness or its force. I should be disposed, were it worth your while, to fight a little side battle with you about Saving Bank Balances. I do not admit the doctrine of Bank Reserves to be applicable to them without qualification! But I made a step, nay a stride, towards you in the large conversion of Saving Bank Stocks into annuities which brings at short intervals a very large roll of money into the coffers.

"But this is a mere parenthesis, and not meant as any qualification of the thanks which I tender to you for this new and important contribution to the comprehension by the public of the great money question. I expect to spend most of November in town, and hope you will some day look in upon me."

From Howick, Tesbury, Northumberland, Lord Grey wrote:—

"DEAR MR. BAGEHOT,

". . . I have now read your *Lombard Street*, which I have found very interesting and I have learned from it a great deal of which I was ignorant. It strongly confirms me in my previous opinion as to our currency, for it seems to me that you clearly make out that the danger of the existing state of things is even greater than I had supposed. You hold out to us no hope of escaping under it from a repetition of panics, or of its being possible if they again occur for the Government of the day to refuse to act as their predecessors have done. It may also I think be gathered from what you say, that there is a probability that each succeeding exercise of irregular power by the Government will be carried further and be more lightly adopted than the one before, nor do I perceive that you are able to point out any good grounds for feeling confidence that the Government and the Bank together may not so act as to render a suspension of cash payments almost unavoidable. Indeed if some great political disaster

were to happen at the same time that a period of over-spending came to its natural end of a panic, that is what would probably happen.

"But I also agree with you in thinking that however great may be the objections to the existing system it is too firmly established to be suddenly and violently altered. And it is on this ground especially that I think the measure I have recommended would be useful. It nominally would make little difference in the position of the Bank. The Act of 1844 has already professed to divide entirely the trading business of the Bank from the duty of issuing the paper currency, I only propose to make this dividing more real and at the same time to apply more completely than at present the principle which is recognised as the right one with regard to the issue of paper. The importance of the change would consist first in the moral effect on the other Banks in leading them to feel that they must not depend too much on the Bank of England, and secondly in its making it for their interest to have reserves of their own independent of their deposits in the Bank of England. These deposits yield them no interest at all, whereas if they kept the same amount partly in stock and partly in bullion, what was in stock would give them interest though at a low rate, and they would be able at any moment to command the whole amount of their reserve in notes, not only without pressing on the Bank of England or the money market, but with the effect of relieving the market by throwing a fresh supply of cash into it. I should anticipate that all the great joint stock Banks would then be led to keep their reserves themselves, and that by this voluntary action on their part we should soon be relieved from the danger of having practically only a single reserve. I attach so much importance to providing for this and for the sudden expansion of the currency during a panic without a violation of the law, that I should recommend that the Currency Committee should be authorised to accept $\frac{2}{3}$ instead of $\frac{1}{2}$ the value of the notes they issued in stock if I were confident that by so far reducing the proportion of bullion given to them for notes, there might not possibly be a danger of their being left with

too little bullion to make the convertibility of the notes secure. This might possibly be averted by a stringent provision for the sale of stock to buy bullion whenever it began to fall too low.

"Yours very faithfully,
"GREY."

Mr. William Stanley Jevons, the economist and logician, wrote of *Lombard Street*:—

"*23rd June*, 1873.

"I had carefully read the work some time before with the object which I have not been able to carry out, of reviewing it. So far as I am able to judge it is by far the best account which we have of the working of our banking system, and your wonderful power of delicate analysis and description have never been more strikingly applied even in your *English Constitution*. I cannot entertain a doubt that you fully expose the weak points of our financial system, involving as it does an extreme and perilous economy of capital and bullion. Although certain changes which you suggest would probably be for the better, I do not think that anything can do permanent good except a wide diffusion among bankers and merchants of a correct comprehension of the subject which will lead them to perceive that excessive economy and the absence of any appreciable reserves must give rise to violent fluctuations. It is only the general increase of caution and foresight which can cope with the difficulties arising from the enormous increase of the scale of transactions. Lowe's bill is a very mild one, and though apparently sound will have no effect beyond rendering acts of indemnity unnecessary. If he could have obliged the Bank to publish the amount of the Banker's balance (in the aggregate) the effect would have been much greater, but I confess I think legislative remedies will not do much."

Of *Lombard Street* Sir William Hunter, a nephew of my father's and the author, among other important works on India, of *Rural Bengal*, a book which Bagehot greatly admired,

wrote in 1890: "I have just re-read, for the fourth or fifth time, Mr. Bagehot's *Lombard Street.* My edition is the fourth, which I purchased in India in 1873, very shortly after the book appeared. If I may venture to say so, it still seems in my judgment to be quite the greatest work on the subject which I have read in any language."

President Woodrow Wilson writes:—

"His (Bagehot's) *Lombard Street* is the most outwardly serious of his greater writings. It is his picture of the money market, whose public operations and hidden influences he exhibits with his accustomed, apparently inevitable lucidity. He explains as perhaps only he could explain, the parts played in the market by the Chancellors of the Exchequer whose counsellor he often was, by the Bank of England, and by the joint-stock banks, such as his own in Somersetshire; the influences, open and covert, that make for crisis or for stability—the whole machinery and the whole psychology of the subtle game and business of finance. There is everywhere the same close intimacy between the fact and the thought. What he writes seems always a light playing through affairs, illuminating their substance, revealing their fibre."

Much of stirring public interest happened in the year 1870. Bagehot had brought forward the question of the Irish land tenure at the Political Economy Club dinner as early as 4th February, and on 15th February, in a speech of three hours, Mr. Gladstone propounded the nature of the bill in the House. On 31st May it was passed. Mr. Forster brought forward his famous Education Bill and this was passed without a division. Lord Clarendon died in June and Mr. Bright retired in December. On 10th July War was declared by France against Prussia in the French Chamber; on 1st September the Emperor of the French surrendered himself and his army of 80,000 men to the King of Prussia.

It was seven years after the notable articles on "The Emperor of the French" were written, that a scene occurred which I can very vividly recall. On that 1st September, 1870, while Walter, my husband, and I were lunching together at The Poplars, a telegram was brought in; Walter read it out

aloud. "Emperor Napoleon surrendered with army of 80,000 to the Germans at Sédan." He uttered a low exclamation and gave an expressive jerk of his head. The news impressed him greatly ; the curtain had dropped on the career which he had watched for twenty years with a strange, almost personal interest. Suddenly, dramatically, Napoleon III. had given up the game. To quote Bagehot's words, the Emperor had a mind "daring in idea ; recoiling before the difficult and hazardous ; shrinking from the irrevocable, and certain not to venture on the desperate".

The following extracts are from his article in the *Economist* of 20th August, 1870, "The Collapse of Cæsarism" :—

"The marvellous failure of the French Imperial system to effect that which seemed *most* likely to be within its power, the complete military organisation of France, and the still more marvellous success of the Prussian system in the attainment of that end for Prussia—a success such as, if you consider the *proportion* between the military strength attained and the wealth and population of the nation which has attained it, is not to be paralleled in the history of the world—present a very instructive contrast. You can hardly say that in France it is 'personal government' which has failed, without admitting that in some true sense in Germany it is 'personal government' which has succeeded. . . . We think we may say safely that it is Cæsarism that has utterly failed in France—meaning by Cæsarism, that peculiar system of which Louis Napoleon—still, we suppose, nominally the Emperor of the French—is the great exponent, which tries to win directly from a *plébiscite*, *i.e.*, the vote of the people, a power for the throne to override the popular will as expressed in regular representative assemblies, and to place in the monarch an indefinite 'responsibility' to the nation, by virtue of which he may hold in severe check the intellectual criticism of the more educated classes and even the votes of the people's own delegates. That is what we really mean by Cæsarism, the abuse of the confidence reposed by the most ignorant in a great name to hold at bay the reasoned arguments of men who both know the popular wish and also are sufficiently educated to discuss

the best means of gratifying those wishes. A virtually irresponsible power obtained by one man from the vague preference of the masses for a particular name, that is Cæsarism, and that is a system which has undoubtedly undergone a sudden and frightful collapse such as none but the very worst hereditary monarchies in Europe have sustained. The reverse for France is infinitely greater than the reverse of 1866 for Austria. Everyone knew that Austria was a weak, divided, and all but bankrupt State, torn by the internal divisions of populations of the most diverse blood, language, and religion, and behind the world in the application of science to the military arts. With France it was in every respect different. Homogeneous, as few States in Europe are homogeneous—animated by but one spirit in relation to this particular war—if not leading the military science of the day, at least known to be one among the leaders—rich in money—full of credit—high in military pride—there was hardly one element of failure which she had in common with Austria, and yet her reverses have been as signal and all but as complete. . . .

"We hold, therefore, that Napoleon has failed, not only through that loneliness of power which has given him no natural allies among the educated people of France, and compelled him to seek the aid of men of little honour or scrupulousness, but that he has failed also exactly in consequence of his abject dependence on that ignorant Conservatism of the peasantry to which he has looked for the popularity of his *régime*."

For the June number of the *Fortnightly Review*, 1870, Bagehot wrote "Bad Lawyers or Good," and for the Metaphysical Society a paper "On the Emotion of Conviction" which was published in the April number of the *Contemporary Review*, 1871. The organiser of this Metaphysical Society was Mr. James Knowles (Sir James Knowles) the then editor of the *Contemporary Review*, but who is better known as the editor of the *Nineteenth Century Review*, which he afterwards became. By profession an architect, he had designed Lord Tennyson's house in Surrey. Poets, Philosophers, Theologians, serious thinkers belonging to all denominations, were invited to join

the Metaphysical Society provided they were distinguished as thinkers. Tennyson, Cardinal Manning, Dean Stanley, Gladstone, Huxley, Hutton, Ward, Bagehot, Dr. Martineau, Froude, Magee, Bishop of Peterborough, Greg, Professor Clifford, all these and more than these were members. They dined together about once a month, and a paper was read which led off the discussion on the subject chosen for debate. Bagehot found these meetings extremely interesting. He would often retail to us something of what passed at them. The discussions revived trains of thought which he and Mr. Hutton had shared together, lines of argument which they had threshed out in conversation or correspondence in earlier days. The area of such speculations was enormously widened when discussed at the Metaphysical Society. To hear the views of those as various in their tenets of belief as were Dr. Ward, Martineau, Dean Stanley, Huxley, Bishop Magee and Clifford, when arguing on the same subject, naturally enlarged greatly the aspect of each subject. In the same year, 1871, Mr. Froude read a paper on "Evidence," Dean Stanley one on "Authority," each being discussed with perfect freedom. Many of the papers were published in the *Contemporary Review*, but the discussions that followed were treated as confidential.

Bagehot had for some years belonged to the Political Economy Club and found the debates which took place after the dinners given by the Club, very suggestive. Many ideas which found expression in the *Economic Studies* most probably germinated during the discussions of this Society. Bagehot's mind was ever alert in seizing a suggestion, and such suggestions were ever fruitful in creating an original thought. There was no "padding"—to use the word he invented in the literary sense it is now used—in his intellectual life, all was ingeniously to the point.

On 2nd July, 1870, Bagehot's Tribute to Lord Clarendon appeared in the *Economist*. "The late Lord Clarendon," he wrote, "belonged to a very small and very remarkable class of peers. There are many peers, as the lawyers, who have no birth, but who worked hard in their youth; and there are also many who have the highest birth, and have never worked the

least. There are many who have earned rank, and many who have inherited rank. But it is rare to find a peer who inherits his rank and yet who knows what it is to earn his bread. . . . When Lord Clarendon was in the Excise Office in Dublin and all through his younger life, there was but a distant probability of his coming to the title, and he had to work really for his bread. And the training of his young days was probably of use to him always.

"To the last week of his death he was a curiously unremitting worker. With somewhat peculiar hours and times he got through more work probably in the twenty-four hours than most administrators of his time, and finished it all with care and accuracy. There were none of the gratuitous blunders and hurried errors which mostly characterise the work of one who is so much praised for great activity; everything was carefully considered and carefully executed.

"Perhaps it is not unconnected with this praise that there was an indescribable repose about Lord Clarendon's manner and appearance. No one who saw him, in his later years at least, would have ever thought him a specially active man. He seemed a very calm, sensible, and singularly courteous old gentleman; and it would scarcely have occurred to a casual observer that he was an exceedingly indefatigable worker. But those who have watched the habits of men of business in politics and out of it will have seen many cases in which a still and quiet man who does not seem to be doing much, and probably is talking of something quite different, has in matter of fact and at the week's end accomplished much more than the 'rushing mighty wind'; the very energetic man who is never idle or at rest and who has no thought but his office business. A still man like Lord Clarendon has time to think what he will do, and most incessant men are apt to act before they have thought, and therefore land where they should not, or else lose half their time in sailing back again.

"It was, perhaps, the result of Lord Clarendon's early training that he always took great interest in commerce, and whenever he had the power steadily used the agency of the Foreign Office for its advantage. . . . In one respect we are

not inclined to join in the universal praise which within the last few days Lord Clarendon has received. He has been greatly praised as a writer, and no doubt he wrote not only with great facility but with much elegance. But there is one great difficulty about almost all his despatches. Each sentence is clear, and no word brings you to a stop; but yet after a few paragraphs a careful reader suddenly pauses to think where he is and what he has assented to. And even when he reads the paragraphs over again he will not always find it easy to be sure that he sees the limits of what was meant and the limits of what was not meant. The limpid flow of delicate words takes him steadily on, but where at any precise instant he is he cannot be very confident. For the old intercourse of foreign Courts this sort of style has immense advantages: it gives no present offence, and, having no marked sentences, leaves no barbed words for after irritation. . . .

"But we do not need now to dwell at length on a point so subordinate. It is much for a man of Lord Clarendon's standing to have written nearly perfectly in the old style, it is no ground for serious blame to him that he did not invent a new style. He will be remembered by posterity as a Minister singularly suited to the transition age in which he lived, and as possessing both the courtly manners which are going out, and also the commercial tastes and the business knowledge which are coming in. Some critics will, as we have said, find fault with his want of special designs and of a far-reaching policy. But to this generation of Englishmen this was no fault at all. . . . And for an age like this Lord Clarendon was a fitting Minister, for he had a wise sagacity to interfere as little, and to refrain from acting as much as prudence rendered possible."

On "The Retirement of Mr. Bright," Bagehot wrote in the *Economist* of 24th December, 1870:—

"The retirement of Mr. Bright from the Cabinet, owing to failing health, will give all the older readers of the *Economist* a peculiar feeling of sadness. A new generation is attaining life and vigour to whom the 'Anti-Corn Law League' is a matter of history. If you chance to speak of it as 'the

League' as we always used to speak of it, they ask '*What* League?' But the great majority of active men still remember the details of that great agitation, and how Mr. Bright's voice rang full and penetrating, second in power only to one if second to any, over those great open stages. That Mr. Bright has to abandon active administration will come home to many as an unwelcome hint that it is time for them to give up themselves.

"If, as has been said, 'it is a proud thing to have millions of opponents and *no* enemy,' Mr. Bright has a full right to be proud. Persons at a distance who disapprove of his principles, and who only think of him as an incarnation of them, undoubtedly hate him with a strong political hatred; but no one brought close to him does so. There is an evident sincerity and bluff *bona fides* about him, which goes straight to the hearts of Englishmen. We have been often amused to see how much, in the depths of Tory districts where 'John Bright' was bitterly execrated, the regular residents were puzzled because their own M.P.'s and the most conservative people who went to London always mentioned him with geniality and toleration, and if young, would say, in the modern dialect—'Well, after all, he is a great *institution*'."

In 1871, besides *Lombard Street*, Bagehot was still working at *Physics and Politics*. He also wrote another article for the *Fortnightly Review* on "Senior's Journals". Mr. Gladstone had affirmed in the *Edinburgh Review* that "unhappily we scarcely possessed in England the kind of writer who abroad is called a publicist". Bagehot thought Mr. Senior "came very near to it".

Though constantly interrupted in his work by illness, Bagehot nevertheless managed to write pretty continuously for the *Economist*. When too ill to go into London, Mr. Giffen would come to The Poplars to see him and arrange matters relative to the editing of the paper. Before Mr. Giffen joined the staff, Bagehot, as a rule, wrote the money article himself. After that time the actual writing of these articles was generally done by Mr. Giffen after consultation with Bagehot.

Sir Robert Giffen writes in his article on "Bagehot as an Economist":[1] "It was my happy fortune," in the last nine years of his life, "to be intimately associated with him in the conduct of the *Economist* newspaper. During this period, accordingly, I had not only to discuss topics of political economy with him, especially the topics of banking and the money market, incessantly, but I had to know his mind so thoroughly on all leading subjects of the day as to be able to write in accordance with his views when he was himself at a distance."

1871 was a year of stirring excitements in France, the year of the siege of Paris, the Commune, anarchism and Civil War, the destruction of the Column in the Place Vendome, part of the Tuilleries and other monuments and buildings in Paris; the assembly at Bordeaux to settle terms of peace, and the subsequent meeting at Versailles, when M. Thiers and Jules Favre signed these terms and Bismarck accepted their signatures. On all these thrilling events Bagehot wrote in the *Economist.* He had early mastered the characteristic qualities of the French nature, consequently all the events resulting therefrom in this crisis of their national life he watched with peculiar interest.

Through our old friend, Mme. Mohl, we heard many particulars of the actual state of things during the siege, and the Commune. She had fled to London before the horrors began, leaving M. Mohl and her precious cats, whom she loved, in charge of the old confidential servant, Julie. When she returned to 120, Rue du Bac, the cats were no more. They had fallen victims to the starving populace during the siege. Mme. Mohl was heartbroken and hated the Emperor Napoleon, to whom she attributed all the misfortunes of France, with more violent hatred than ever. When all was quiet in Paris, M. Mohl came to London to escort her back. They, Mr. Goschen and Mr. and Mrs. Townsend, dined with the Bagehots to discuss all the strange things that had come to pass within the past twelve months. Such discussion be-

[1] The *Fortnightly Review*, 1st April, 1880.

tween M. Mohl and Bagehot was most instructive. On the general condition of France, Bagehot had written nine articles in the *Economist* besides many more on the particular events of the war, and on the terms of peace. He thought these exorbitant and Bismarck too unmerciful to the conquered. On home politics his articles on "Mr. Lowe on Education," "Mr. Forster and Educational Compulsion," "Mr. Lowe as Chancellor of the Exchequer," "Mr. Lowe's warning," give in short the history of the important questions before the House, but perhaps at the time this book is written, the most generally interesting of Bagehot's articles in the *Economist* of that year, would be that on "Mr. Gladstone on Home Rule for Ireland" with reference to his speech delivered at Aberdeen.

"MR. GLADSTONE ON HOME RULE FOR IRELAND.
(*The Economist*, 30*th September*, 1871.)

"The Prime Minister's speech at Aberdeen cannot at any rate be charged with that tendency to intellectual hesitation and finesse which is the favourite taunt of his opponents. In speaking of the Irish cry for Home Rule, Mr. Gladstone drew no fine distinctions, and came to no ambiguous conclusion. He asked if the United Parliament was to be broken up because it could not or would not do justice to Ireland, or only to please the Irish fancy. If the former were alleged the answer was that for the last three years the United Parliament has been eagerly engaged in doing for Ireland what it would hardly have done for either England or Scotland—no doubt because neither England nor Scotland stood in need of the measures granted as Ireland did, but none the less did this sufficiently demonstrate the perfect willingness and capacity of the United Parliament to redress all real Irish grievances. If the latter were alleged, that the Irish do not *choose* to take even good government from the hands of a United Parliament, then the answer is that on that head the Irish have only the right to vote with the other members of the Union; the whole Union has a right to decide what is in this respect for the common benefit, and unless any party can allege that their individual interests are trampled on by the Union, the

whole Union has a right to say whether union or separation will best promote the interests of all. And this in point of fact, as everybody knows, Great Britain has long ago decided. In Mr. Gladstone's own vigorous words, 'can any sensible man, can any rational man suppose that, at this time of day, in this condition of the world, we are going to disintegrate the great capital institutions of this country for the purpose of making ourselves ridiculous in the sight of all mankind, and crippling any power we possess forbestowing benefits throughlegislation on the country to which we belong?'

"That is clear, forcible language which may, we hope, have the effect of showing the Home Rule party in Ireland that while Ireland may gain almost anything that is reasonable and just from the Imperial Parliament, she will not gain the repeal of the Union for which that party is now crying out, and which would be indeed in many respects far more mischievous to British interests, and perhaps even to Irish interests, than absolute independence.

"Indeed it is hard to conceive anything more mischievous than the opening of an indefinite and indefinitely increasable number of debatable issues between Great Britain and Ireland, such as would be not merely suggested but forced on the public by the division of duties between an Irish and British Parliament. It is difficult enough to divide the sphere of properly municipal or country from properly central and Parliamentary powers, and almost impossible to do so beneficially without giving Parliament an absolute overriding power in case of conflict. But this difficulty would not only be enhanced a thousand times by the great importance, unity, and national coherence of an Irish Parliament, but it would be quite impossible to give the Imperial (or as it would then be, Federal) Parliament a power to override the decisions of an Irish Parliament without provoking something like a rebellion on every separate occasion. It may be said, perhaps, that this difficulty has never been felt in the United States, where the State powers and the Federal powers are divided by a hard and fast line, which neither State nor Federation have the power to overleap. But in point of fact the difficulty has been felt and felt very

keenly, and though not for precisely the same reasons as it would be felt in this case, yet for a similar class of reasons, namely, because the genius and policy of a certain group of the States diverged very widely from the genius and policy of the remainder, the Secession War was in fact a State revolt against the Central power, and though that Secession was due not to race, but to a 'domestic institution' of a most potent and mischievous kind, yet difference of race and religion conjointly are certainly quite capable of producing as great a chasm of feeling between the different members of a Federation as in any difference in 'domestic institutions'. Only consider for a moment what an Irish Parliament would be disposed to feel if it found itself compelled to impose taxes for a war in which the sympathies of Ireland were directly opposed to the sympathies of Great Britain, or were even hindered from imposing taxes for some purely Irish object by the weight of the taxation for imperial purposes which it disapproved. Is it even inconceivable that such a Parliament could long exist without becoming a centre of the fiercest disloyalty and even treason? Or put aside questions of finance, and look only at ecclesiastical policy. Would not it be very probable that one of the first efforts of Ireland's separate Parliament would be to re-establish a Church in Ireland, but not this time a Protestant but a Catholic Church —an effort which would probably give rise to civil war unless England interfered to thwart the wish of the Catholic party, in which case the danger of a violent disruption would arise again from another cause? It is in fact as plain as common sense can make it to all who look at the condition of Ireland with impartial eyes, that 'Home Rule' would be but the first step in a series of virulent disputes as to the political relations of the two islands, which could hardly be except in separation, or reconquest, with all the evils that that would bring in its train. The Home Rule party would certainly be imprudent, but they would be far more logical, if they were to raise a cry at once for an Independent Irish Republic."

The very stirring public events of 1871 were followed on the continent and in England by a comparative lull. In the

spring of 1872 Bagehot was writing the preface to the second edition of the *English Constitution.* While he was completing it, Mr. Sanford, his old college friend, was staying at The Poplars, and was consulted by Bagehot as to the advisability of leaving out the historical chapter in the book as Mr. Freeman had quarrelled with certain views expressed in this chapter. Mr. Sanford, a sound authority of history,[1] advised its retention believing Bagehot's view to be the correct one, and Mr. Sanford's advice was taken. When the second edition was ready for publication in July, Bagehot made the acquaintance of Baron Von Holtzandorf who was about to translate the *English Constitution* into German, and was then attending the Prison Congress in London, and invited him and Mr. Sanford to dinner to discuss this muted point. When this German edition appeared, the newspaper which was Bismarck's organ referred to the *English Constitution*, as Bagehot revealed it, as "Eine République in weissen glacé Handschuh" (a republic in white kid gloves). It was also in that July that Walter finished his supplementary chapter to *Physics and Politics.*

Early in the year 1873 the curtain fell finally on the Napoleonic era. The Emperor Napoleon died on 9th January and was buried at Chiselhurst, 2,000 Frenchmen being present at the funeral. In the *Economist* of 11th January, 1873, Bagehot writes: "The death of the Emperor Napoleon throws a flood of light upon his later life. The delays, hesitations and vacillations, together with the febrile irritability with which he pressed forward his idea of a new *plébiscite*, may be attributed to the growing, though secret influence of his malady. Under its influence he ceased to be able to examine into details, lost his confidence in old friends, and began to indulge in the despondency which sent him in 1870 to the field a man beaten in advance."

[1] John Langton Sanford, Barrister-at-Law, Lincoln's Inn, was the author of "Studies and Illustrations of the Great Rebellion, Estimates of the Kings of England, from William the Conqueror to George III.," and in conjunction with Mr. Meredith Townsend a series of papers which appeared first in the *Spectator* entitled "The Great Governing Families of England". Mr. Sanford was preparing an important historical work when his eyesight failed and it was never written. He died shortly after Walter Bagehot.

Bagehot wrote at least fifteen articles on France and French affairs in the *Economist* during that year, one of especial interest in the number dated 13th December on "The Condemnation of Marshal Bazaine," for having betrayed his country by capitulating with the enemy during the siege of Metz.

The impeachment of the Marshal was, he points out, after the expulsion of M. Thiers. He gives an impressive description of the splendour of the trial that took place at Versailles, and the manner in which, what in reality meant a political move, was dramatised into a scene made to assume the appearance of an heroic outburst of patriotic indignation. "Not only the French themselves, with their national passion for *Spectacle*, but the whole of civilised Europe have been impressed by the splendour of this trial, the solemnity of the issue, the dignity of the tribunal, the highly wrought eloquence of the prosecution and the defence, the rigorous severity of the sentence, and the passionate protest of the accused."

Bagehot was *au fait* with the characteristic moods of the French and the methods they take to conceal their political intrigues. He passes by this splendid drama and sets to work to probe the real motives which made the party in power wish "to re-open, by an inquiry into the circumstances of the capitulation of Metz, the whole story of Bonapartist mismanagement and corruption".

In January, 1873, Mr. Graves, the Member for Liverpool, died, and Bagehot was approached as to whether he would stand as the Liberal candidate for the vacant seat, but this he declined.

On 13th March, 1873, the Gladstone Ministry resigned on the Irish University Bill. Bagehot writes on the event in the *Economist*. "Some years since a great traveller who had braved unnumbered hardships fell by a petty accident while shooting in this country. And the fate of the great ministry of Mr. Gladstone has been in popular feeling at least somewhat similar. After attempting more than any Ministry for many years, and after achieving more, on a sudden it has fallen on what seems a question of infinitesimal magnitude." Mr. Disraeli, however, declined office, and on 17th March, Mr.

Gladstone announced in Parliament that he had undertaken to reconstruct the Ministry. Bagehot writes that this was a piece of good fortune. "The evils of a Government in a minority are so great that we are most anxious to save the nation from them; the Conservative party has on three occasions in twenty years made the experiment and it has found that, bad and painful as the trial is for the nation, it is far worse and more painful for the party which makes it. No one can wish—Mr. Disraeli owns that he does not wish—to revive such a Government as we saw in 1852, in 1858, and in 1867. The worst state of Parliamentary Government is a coalition of Conservatives and Radicals, or as they say in France of the extreme Right, and the extreme Left. The effect of it is that, as in 1867, the Conservatives pass much more than most Radicals really wish, and that they pass it unwillingly, reluctantly, and believing that they are doing harm."

The Bagehots travelled abroad for two months in the autumn of 1873, beginning by a pilgrimage to Metz and the battlefield of Gravelotte. They went on to Strasburg, Freiburg, Schaffhausen, Meran and Botzen. Here they caught sight of the Dolomite mountains, and on one evening watched the strange eerie sight far up in the sky, the socalled *Rosengarten*, when, after the sun has set, a rosy hue strikes their sharp peaks, isolating them from the world below—a world already fading into the shades of night. The Bagehots pursued their travels from Botzen and visited Innsbruck, Munich, Augsburg, Stuttgart, Baden and returned home by Brussels and Ghent, stopping at any small place between the big towns marked by special beauty of scenery or by an historical or political association. Bagehot carried his mind with him during his holidays, and few of his travels were planned without their being linked to some interest, literary, historical or political. When back in England they decided to take a house in South Kensington for the winter. Driving to and from The Poplars was becoming irksome to Walter, especially during the winter months.

In February, 1874, at the change of Ministry, Lord Carnarvon returned to the Colonial Office. He wrote to Bagehot: "I hardly know whether I am really a subject for congratula-

tion or no, but I hope that I have done right in taking my present office. I hope I may get the chance of a quiet talk with you when the confusion and skurry of the present are over. How I pity any one who has to undertake the Colonial Office with no previous knowledge of it. Chaos would be a trifle compared to what he would pass through."

On 7th February appeared in the *Economist* the first of four articles on the change of ministry. Mr. Gladstone had been in for six years from 1868; then Mr. Disraeli took his place as Prime Minister, and likewise reigned for six years, Mr. Gladstone returning in 1880.

"The Conservative Majority" is the first of these four articles. "For the first time for nearly thirty years there is the prospect of a Conservative majority in the House of Commons. It requires more thought than we have as yet had time to give to realise a state of things so new and so different from that to which we have been so long accustomed. We shall only hazard for the present one or two isolated remarks.

"First, if one party or other must hold power with a small majority, the Conservative is the better of the two. In the first place its majorities are more to be relied upon. The Liberals, being a movement party, want to move in various directions, and it is difficult to induce them to keep together; but as the Conservatives wish to go nowhere, they are not tempted to diverge. The Liberals are, too, a much more various body by class, education, and character than the Conservatives, though the diversities among the latter are increasing. The opinions and votes of Liberals differ more than those of Conservatives because the men differ more. In consequence, a Conservative majority of twenty is a far better thing for the business of the country than a Liberal majority of the same number, for the Government can always be sure that its majority will attend and support it. Secondly, if the Liberals have only a small majority, the working of the constitution is dependent on the Irish Home Rulers. Nothing is stronger than its weakest part, and as the Home Rulers count as part of the Liberal majority, that majority is apt to be weakened, or perhaps annihilated, by its secession. But a Conservative

majority is in no similar danger. It does not depend on Home Rulers at all. The worst that they can do is to vote against it in conjunction with all the other Liberals, but even if they do so the Conservative majority outnumbers them, and is a majority still. A Conservative Government is not intrinsically to be desired, but at least it delivers us from the rule of the faction which is anti-English in essence, and which wishes to destroy the Empire."

In the *Economist* of 14th February, 1874, Bagehot reviews Mr. Gladstone's Ministry :—

"Most Governments since 1832 have been deficient in the essence of a Government—power. They have not been backed by a sufficient majority to enable them to do what they liked; sometimes they have not had a majority at all; generally they have had only a 'working majority,' as it is called—a majority that is, enough to enable them to transact the common work of Parliament, but not enough to enable them to enact their own ideas or to propose large reforms adverse to great interests. There have, indeed, been only two Governments of immense power since 1832. The first is the Whig Government which followed the Reform Act of that time; and that was no doubt a Government which achieved much, and which has a great name in history. But Mr. Disraeli long ago pointed out its defect: it was not 'presided over by a guiding and original mind'. Lord Grey belonged to a past period; he represented a great tradition, but he was not a great reality. When he passed the Reform Act his special work was almost done. Lord Althorp was a country gentleman of strong character, but he had no great abilities, and had no taste for office, and wished, as he said, that he was 'back among his pheasants and his fowling-piece'. The influence of Lord Russell, defective as it was, did not begin to predominate till the omnipotence of the Whigs was passed; before he ruled, the Conservative reaction of those years had begun. In consequence the efforts of the Whig Cabinet of 1832 wanted effect and unity; they were often most excellent, but they were never so impressive as they ought to have been, and they are now most insufficiently borne in mind because they did not emanate from, and were not

associated with, a single mind of vast vigour and ability. The commanding element in life and history is a great person. One Napoleon is worth fifty common generals; he can do far more, and what he does will be infinitely better remembered. No Cabinet can effectually rule this country if it is a Cabinet only—if it is not itself ruled by a great Prime Minister. The element of greatness nobody will deny to Mr. Gladstone's Government. Any time this five years it has been easy to hear almost every kind of criticism on Mr. Gladstone; it is particularly easy now when everybody is finding out that they have always been Conservatives. But no one ever hinted that on a great subject, and when his mind was made up, he did not carry his Cabinet before him, and penetrate their policy with his peculiar personality.

"The only other Government of similar power since 1832 is that of Sir Robert Peel, which succeeded the election of 1841. This Government was followed by a great majority, and ruled by a great Prime Minister; but it was utterly weak in another way—it had no characteristic measures, and is now known by uncharacteristic measures. It was elected to maintain Protection, and it abolished Protection; to maintain the Corn Laws, and it abolished the Corn Laws. Except the Bank Act of 1844, which is an outlying matter, the Government of Sir Robert Peel is known only by its recantations. A first-rate Government embodies in acts and laws the principle of a preconceived policy, but Sir Robert Peel's Government abandoned its own previous policy and adopted that of its adversaries.

"In this respect the Government of Mr. Gladstone is indisputably superior. It has, as everybody admits, been faithful to the principles which it announced. A single mistake in the Education Act is the sole exception which can even be fancied. The Government entered office with a list of congenial measures, and it passed these and others.

"The result of our comparison therefore is that the administration of Mr. Gladstone is much superior to all others since 1832, save two, in force and power; and that to one of these two it is superior in possessing a suitable great man, and to the other in having passed suitable great measures. When

posterity compares the two, it will probably say that Mr. Gladstone is not by several degrees so great an administrator as Sir R. Peel, but that he is by at least as many degrees a greater orator. To equal or rival Mr. Gladstone's Budget speeches we must go farther back, to those of Pitt, and the remains of Pitt's speeches are too fragmentary to enable us to say what was their merit in comparison. Neither Sir Robert Peel nor Mr. Gladstone can of course be put in the first order of statesmen; both their careers have one fatal fault; they were converted assailants—they ended by enacting what they began by opposing. But Mr. Gladstone has been far more fortunate. Sir Robert Peel, by changes of opinion, twice destroyed his party and Government; but Mr. Gladstone has never destroyed either, and lived to enact his truest and best ideas with the approbation of our strongest recent party and the aid of our strongest recent Government. But in another respect Sir Robert Peel was far happier. He left a school of able and attached political pupils; but, whether from difference of time or character, Mr. Gladstone will leave none. When he retires there will be no Gladstonite, though there were Peelites for so many years."

Of the new Conservative Government Bagehot writes, in concluding an article in the *Economist* of 21st February, 1874:—

"If its policy be good, it will last long; if its policy be foolish, its end may not be far off. A policy of unmixed Conservatism is contrary to the irresistible conditions of life. There is a special cause in politics requiring change. One generation is, without ceasing, passing away, another is coming on to take its place—the new generation and the old differ in innumerable particulars. They think different thoughts, use different words, live a different life. The mere externals—the gait and dress and the houses of the two—are unlike, and, therefore, their politics cannot be the same. Changes in laws, changes in administration, changes in policy are incessantly requisite; the old laws, the old administration, the old policy, will not fit 'the new men,' will annoy and irritate them, and will be cast off with speed and anger."

The last of the four mentioned articles is on "The Structure of the New Government".

"Mr. Disraeli's Cabinet is remarkable," he writes, "in one respect because it is the smallest of late years. It has only twelve members whereas Mr. Gladstone's had at various times either fifteen or sixteen, and we think some others have had as many. The smaller number was much more in accordance with the old custom of the Constitution, and Mr. Disraeli has been much praised for returning to the former practice."

Bagehot's interest in theological questions was kept alive in several directions in the winter of 1874-75. When dining with Mr. Knowles, the Hon. Secretary of the Metaphysical Society, he made the acquaintance of Bishop Colenso. On December Mr. Greg read a paper at a meeting of the Society on "Revelation," which formed subject for private discussion between Bagehot and him. Sir FitzJames Stephen read a paper at the meeting of 12th January which treated "of a theory of Cardinal Newman's as to believing in mysteries". On this occasion Mr. Gladstone was in the chair. The famous controversy between Cardinal Newman and Mr. Gladstone on the "Vatican Decrees" was taking place at that time. The latter had written his first pamphlet on the subject, and a long account of Dr. Newman's answer to it, framed in a letter to the Duke of Norfolk, appeared in *The Times*.

In *The Times* on the 15th of January appeared Gladstone's letter to Lord Granville resigning the leadership of the Liberal party in the House of Commons, and on the following day appeared Bagehot's article in the *Economist* on his resignation.

"In one respect Mr. Gladstone is unique. Many statesmen have written books in retirement, and some have ostentatiously commended it. But ordinarily those books are tame and those commendations forced. Now that they feel no longer the excitement of the Senate or of office, all else seems tasteless to them, and you can trace that langour in every phrase they utter. But no one can say this of Mr. Gladstone. His writings in retirement may or may not be too many; they may or may not be models of style; but no one can say that they do not show the keenest interest in their subjects. If

he writes in the *Quarterly*, you wonder at the unusual vigour of the anonymous contributor; if he writes on the 'Vatican Decrees,' you admire the minute research and the zeal of disputation which no divine can surpass. In Homeric criticism his eagerness is almost greater: it has long been said of him that he 'cared as much about the sons of Priam as if they had votes on a division,' and, in fact, he can pursue, with elastic energy, inquiries which most bookworms would call tedious. And in all this exceptional earnestness there is not a vestige of affectation. It is the simple expression of an intense nature, which singular to say is both variable and concentrated, which pours itself in a hundred pursuits, but which for the time being is absorbed in each.

"This is the real explanation of Mr. Gladstone's resignation. He can withdraw into comparative retirement, because he can be absorbingly occupied in retirement. If he hears from a distance the din of Parliamentary battle, he is not overpowered with melancholy musing; his compensations are at hand; his study is no place of calm to him, for it is alive with 'hot thought' and rings with controversies for which he cares.

"That Mr. Gladstone has judged wisely for himself in resigning the leadership of the Liberal Party we cannot doubt. There can be little pleasure in leading that party in its present state, and there must be much vexation. It will be impossible to please everybody, and easy not to please anybody. The toil of attending Parliament merely to 'watch the proceedings'; to sit opposite to a Government in anxious hope that it may make some mistake, and with little to say if it does not; to detect errors in figures and poke amendments into clauses,—is an excellent training for young members, but a dismal employment for a finished statesman. In Mr. Gladstone's case it would be particularly melancholy, for it would be a striking contrast to his own Government. After just having achieved much of which even those who question the policy do not doubt the greatness, it would be pitiable to be occupied for session after session in framing minute criticism on measures of which those who approve the object cannot deny the mediocrity. . . .

"The Liberal Party is, by admission, divided: what some wish others reject; what some think an indispensable good others think an irreparable calamity. And many expect Mr. Gladstone to discover the word of the enigma, the measure which is to bring them together. But he cannot do so at this moment, nor can anyone else. Such measures must 'grow'; they cannot be made. A new race of ideas must be formed. Long controversies and many agitations will be necessary before the Liberal Party will be united upon a single plan, and before the nation will be prepared to accept it of them.

"If anything should happen to the present Prime Minister, and if Mr. Gladstone perseveres in retiring, two great parties in the State will be left with what in the cotton market would be called 'best middling' statesmen and with no others. And we believe that the effect will be to make politics as a study less elevating and less instructive to the English people than they have been used to find it. The spectacle of the contentions of first-rate men on subjects which the many care for is the best and almost the only way of bringing home to the many what high mental ability really is, and how completely they are themselves destitute of it. What such men do by intentional benefit is less instructive than that which they confer by the unintentional spectacle of what they are. This it appears likely we may before long much want. As a contemporary of Pitt and Fox said when they had passed away, 'We are left with pigmies whom we know to be pigmies, because we have measured them with giants'."

In the autumn of 1874 the Bagehots travelled in France, visiting Veveys, Clermont in Auvergne, Royat, Mont Dore, Vichy. While at Vichy Walter heard of Monsieur Guizot's death. His funeral took place on 15th September at Val Ricker, near Lisieux, where the Bagehots had visited him. From Vichy Bagehot sent an article on him for the *Economist.* "The announcement of the death of M. Guizot will take the minds of many back to the cold February evenings in 1848, when London, long used to political calm, was convulsed by a new excitement, when we heard cried in rapid succession, 'Resignation of Guizot,' 'Flight of Louis Philippe,' 'Pro-

clamation of the Republic,' and when the present chapter of European politics began. M. Guizot lived to see many events and many changes, but none which restored him to pre-eminence, or which made him once more a European personage. His name was never cried in the London streets again." Bagehot goes on to say how unlike M. Guizot was to the idea which English people form of a Frenchman. "'A Puritan born in France by mistake,' is the description which will most nearly describe him to an ordinary Englishwoman. . . . The French national character is much more various than it is supposed to be according to common English ideas, and the stern variety which M. Guizot represents is one of the most remarkable."

CHAPTER XVI.

"ECONOMIC STUDIES."

AFTER returning from their travels in France in the autumn of 1874, the Bagehots moved into London to the house in Rutland Gate they had taken for a year. The diary records pleasant dinners given there to interesting guests, many visits to picture galleries, to the Old Masters at Burlington House, and to Burne Jones's studio. It was when there that the friendly intercourse began between Lord Bryce and the Bagehots. We were staying with them at the time, and on one Sunday afternoon my husband accompanied Walter on a visit to Mr. and Mrs. George Lewes at the Priory. There they met Lord Bryce, and my husband remembers that on leaving the house together, Bagehot asked him to come to Rutland Gate to see him and my sister, which he did. This acquaintanceship led to the very important results that, at Lord Bryce's suggestion, the early essays were republished after Walter Bagehot's death—consequently a widespread appreciation of Bagehot in America and a rebound of it in England.

After the Bagehots had returned to The Poplars in the spring of 1874, the diary relates how the great reception on 21st May took place, given by Lady Derby at the Foreign Office to meet the Emperor of Russia, the Grand Duke Alexis, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh. The Bagehots and my family greatly enjoyed this evening, but the drive back to Wimbledon was long, especially for Walter, who had to drive into London early the next morning to breakfast with Mr. Goschen.

On the following day, 23rd May, my sister Julia and Mr. Greg were married quietly at St. Stephen's Church, Gloucester Road. With the exception of Lord Avebury and Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, my sister's trustees, only relations were present.

Walter fathered all the necessary business transactions and behaved in a very characteristic manner with regard to an amusing incident which happened in connection with the marriage settlements. These were brought to my mother's house in South Kensington in a hansom cab by a lawyer's clerk on the evening before the wedding. He paid the cab and then rang the bell. When the door was opened he turned round to fetch his papers and found that the cab had driven off with the settlements inside it. The ceremony was to have taken place at nine o'clock in the morning in order that the Cumberland Lakes should be reached the same day. Particular associations were attached to the Lakes, and Mr. Greg made a point of this plan being carried out. It was, however, impossible if the settlements were to be copied out afresh, even if the clerk sat up all night, which he did. A friendly battle ensued, Mr. Greg wishing to waive the signing of the settlements, Walter obdurate in maintaining that no marriage should take place before the settlements were signed. The result of the contest appears in the diary. "22nd May. Mr. Greg stayed till 11 o'clock and notes were written putting Julia's wedding off from 9 to 11. 23rd May. They left for Matlock at 2." Two copies of the settlements were forthcoming on the morning of the wedding; the cabman returned with the original copy and the lawyer's clerk brought the second.

During that year the Bagehots decided to buy a house in London, and settled on 8 Queen's Gate Place, which they gave into the hands of William Morris's firm to furnish and decorate, De Morgan tiles, of course, being a feature of the decoration.

Walter wrote to me that "Wardle is doing most of the house, but the great man himself, William Morris, is composing the drawing-room, as he would an ode". Walter would at times meet William Morris at the Bloomsbury depôt when choosing papers and tiles, and the two would talk poetry as well as furniture. Walter's fancy was tickled at the quaint combination, and at William Morris's autocratic attitude towards all questions of taste. However amusing the culture of æsthetics might be they could not wean Walter entirely. He

had always had a great fondness for children. Amidst the choice designs of an inner hall, which the Morris firm had treated as a special feature in the new house, stood a fine large rocking-horse, crude in colour and carving as such things are, my sister's gift to my boy. As we were passing it one day Walter spurted out suddenly, as he used to do when he enunciated something that was *really* true, "*That's* the best thing in the house".

As soon as 8 Queen's Gate Place was habitable, Mr. and Mrs. Hutton and my husband and I lunched with the Bagehots. Walter did showman and explained William Morris's views as to the morality or immorality of different colours and designs. The poet was composing a specially beautiful blue damask silk for the curtains and furniture of the drawing-rooms. This composition took a long time. Walter said, "They bring me sample-threads every two or three months but the curtains don't come".

On the 13th April, 1875, Walter Bagehot was elected by the Committee of the Athenæum under rule 2. He wrote to my sister who was at Herd's Hill: "The Committee elected me yesterday at the Athenæum quite cheerfully. By the rules they can only elect nine persons a year, and those 'who have attained eminence in Science, Literature, the Arts or for public services'. I wonder in which *my* eminence is." One use to which Bagehot put the Athenæum was to play chess there with Mr. Hutton. Both excelled in the game.

On 7th July of 1875 Sir Stafford Northcote wrote to Bagehot: "A wish has been expressed by the Committee or Banks of Issue to have the advantage of your evidence. Would it be agreeable to you to attend the Committee either on Monday or Thursday in next week or the week after? I should, in that case, be happy to see you and talk over the course of examination beforehand." Again on the 9th he writes: "I have received your telegram and have arranged that, if quite convenient to you, we should take your evidence on Thursday, the 22nd, which will probably be our last day of meeting. Would it suit you to call here on Friday next at a little before 2 o'clock for the purpose of talking over the

course of your examination? If so I shall be very glad to see you."

It was this examination which began the personal relations which existed between Sir Stafford Northcote and Bagehot.

On the death of Professor Cairnes in July, 1875, Bagehot wrote an article in the *Economist* notable for the fine feeling of consideration he evinces for the pathetic conditions under which the eminent political economist worked. With the following words Bagehot concludes the short notice: "In the presence of great difficulties silence is 'better than many words,' and there are few greater difficulties than that a mind so strong and pure should have been so cast aside from life and subjected to so much pain".

In the July of this year Walter lost his friend Lady Carnarvon. Her friendship, no less than her husband's, had given him much pleasure for many years. The visits to Highclere and his frequent intercourse with them in London had been among his greatest social enjoyments, whereas the more intimate talks when he saw them alone were intellectually extremely interesting to him. He estimated both Lord and Lady Carnarvon's abilities very highly. After his wife's death, Lord Carnarvon at once sought Walter Bagehot's sympathy. No one could be a friend of Walter Bagehot's without knowing that he could give help in time of trouble, the genuine warmth of his compassion for sorrow being unfailing, and the manner in which he conveyed his sympathy peculiarly helpful.

In February, 1875, from Rutland Gate, Bagehot writes to Mr. John Morley: "I am very sorry to say I cannot review Harrison. I am writing, or trying to write a book on Political Economy which takes all my leisure (which is not very great), and I cannot think of any other subject till this task is done." This task, grievous to say, was never finished.

In November of the same year Bagehot writes:—

"My dear Morley,

"As the *Fortnightly Review* was in the hidden period between the 'fertilisation of the press' and the appearance of the number, I had no doubt you were abroad when

your answer did not come. Might I write in the *Fortnightly* a series of Articles on English Political Economy? or some such title bringing out its position,—or what *I* think its position,—both as to the historical method and as to the mathematical which are now competing with it, besides some other things which I wish to say on the subject. It would be *six* articles and probably more, and I should want to have the right of republishing them separately as one instalment of a book which I have long been trying to write, but which I fear will never be finished except in pieces. If you will have the articles I could begin early in the next year, and go on at a decent pace I *hope*."

In answer Lord Morley wrote:—

"I will have your articles with the most lively and peculiar satisfaction. When you choose to begin, a place shall be ready for you. It would be very pleasant if you could begin in the January number. Your collaboration will be eminently welcome, and I am much obliged to you."

When Bagehot's mind was engaged on any special piece of writing he did not travel abroad but chose some attractive place in England where he could write at leisure during the autumn holiday. In the summer of 1875 he commenced writing the first chapters on political economy for the *Fortnightly Review*, and in August he and my sister went into Surrey, making their head-quarters first at Barford Bridge, afterwards at Guildford. He would work in the mornings, and in the afternoons they would drive together for hours around these two centres, or, as was his habit when he had no horse to ride, he would take long walks exploring the country. He would often talk out his thoughts aloud during these solitary rambles.

A visit to Herd's Hill followed the Surrey exploration, and then a last tour in Devonshire to those places full of happy associations with his childhood. The results of this autumn's work, "The Postulates of English Political Economy," appeared in the January and February numbers of the *Fortnightly Review*, 1876. It seemed he had some difficulty in continuing the series. Perhaps he felt he could not hurry his mind over

so important a work. He writes to Mr. Morley as quoted, that he had long been "trying to write a book which I fear will never be finished except in pieces". But the pieces even seemed to require great deliberation. Instead of a third chapter of the series he writes in the spring of 1876:—

"My dear Morley,

"Would you have an article on 'Adam Smith as a Person' from me? I have it written and could easily adapt it, I think, for the *Fortnightly*, and I am invited to publish it by this centenary discussion. The general conception would be something like that of the first article in the *Economist* this week, especially the first part of that article,—but grounded on biographical detail. No picture of Adam Smith has ever been given that I know of. I have a third article on Political Economy coming but not ready for July; but even if I had it ready, I should like to finish up this article on 'Adam Smith' just now that the world is thinking of him. I should like to have the right of republishing this essay on Smith if you like it as it was to be one of several on our Economists."

The work which Bagehot contemplated writing on Political Economy was to consist of three volumes. The second volume was to contain the biographies of celebrated Political Economists. Near the beginning of the first chapter of *Economic Studies* Bagehot demonstrates "The inherent difficulty, which," he writes, "no other science, I think, presents in equal magnitude. Years ago I heard Mr. Cobden say at a league meeting that 'Political Economy was the highest study of the human mind, for that the physical sciences required by no means so hard an effort'. An orator cannot be expected to be exactly precise, and of course Political Economy is in no sense the highest study of the mind—there are others which are much higher, for they are concerned with things much nobler than wealth or money; nor is it true that the effort of mind which Political Economy requires is nearly as great as that required for the abstruser theories of physical science, for the theory of gravitation, or the theory of natural selection; but, neverthe-

less, what Mr. Cobden meant had—as was usual with his first-hand mind—a great fund of truth. He meant that Political Economy—effectual Political Economy, Political Economy which in complex problems succeeds—is a very difficult thing; something altogether more abstruse and difficult, as well as more conclusive, than that which many of those who rush in upon it have a notion of. It is an abstract science which labours under a special hardship. Those who are conversant with its abstractions are usually without a true contact with its facts; those who are in contact with its facts have usually little sympathy with and little cognisance of its abstractions. Literary men who write about it are constantly using what a great teacher calls 'unreal words'—that is, they are using expressions with which they have no complete vivid picture to correspond. They are like physiologists who have never dissected; like astronomers who have never seen the stars; and, in consequence, just when they seem to be reasoning at their best, their knowledge of the facts falls short. Their primitive picture fails them, and their deduction altogether misses the mark—sometimes, indeed, goes astray so far that those who live and move among the facts boldly say that they cannot comprehend 'how any one can talk such nonsense'. Yet, on the other hand, these people who live and move among the facts often, or mostly, cannot of themselves put together any precise reasonings about them. Men of business have a solid judgment—a wonderful guessing power of what is going to happen—each in his own trade; but they have never practised themselves in reasoning out their judgments and in supporting their guesses by argument: probably if they did so some of the finer and correcter parts of their anticipations would vanish. They are like the sensible lady to whom Coleridge said: 'Madam, I accept your conclusion, but you must let me find the logic for it'. Men of business can no more put into words much of what guides their life than they could tell another person how to speak their language. And so the 'theory of business' leads a life of obstruction, because theorists do not see the business and the men of business will not reason out the theories. Far from wondering that such a

science is not completely perfect, we should rather wonder that it exists at all."

In the letter in which he offers the article of "Adam Smith," Bagehot writes: "I should much like to write on Althorp, but it could only be in the summer, if then."

The essay "Lord Althorp and the Reform Act of 1832," was written in the autumn of 1876. Walter did not accompany my sister to her German baths, but remained at home writing it. On her return to England they went to the Royal Hotel, Ascot, where it was finished, and it appeared in the November number of the *Fortnightly Review*. This was the last from Bagehot's pen which appeared in any review. I have found it necessary to refrain from re-reading this account of Lord Althorp, otherwise the temptation to quote nearly the whole of it would become irresistible. Every page you turn offers some choice sentence either witty or wise. To repeat one to which Mr. Augustine Birrell called attention in his Lecture on Walter Bagehot at Leighton House: "Through life Lord Althorp continued to be a man strong, though perhaps a little crude in religious belief; and thus gained at the back of his mind a solid seriousness which went well with all the rest of it; and his grief for his wife was almost equally durable. He gave up not only society, which perhaps was no great trial, but also hunting—not because he believed it to be wrong, but because he did not think it seemly or suitable that a man after such a loss should be so very happy as he knew that hunting would make him." Over the page are these few words: "Nothing is so cruel as fear,"—and so on, wisdom and wit throughout.

From 5th February to 30th December, 1876, Bagehot wrote seventeen important articles on the "Depreciation of Silver". Two thousand copies of these he had printed in the *Economist* Office in pamphlet form with Preface and Appendix by himself. They were all sold and have till now never been reprinted.[1]

It was in the early days of 1877 that Sir Stafford North-

[1] This pamphlet will form part of vol. vi. of the complete edition of Walter Bagehot's works.

cote asked Bagehot's advice as to how the difficulty could be met caused by the *Exchequer Bills* having fallen out of favour with the public, while the growing demands on the Exchequer increased owing to Parliament having authorised an extensive system of loans to education and sanitary authorities. Bagehot promptly invented the Treasury Bills which were then, and have been ever since, completely successful in meeting these difficulties.[1]

During the winter of 1876-7, when he had leisure, which was seldom, he worked at the *Economic Studies*. Ideas evidently were always cropping up in his mind on the subject. Valuable records of these were found in a fragmentary form, notes dotted down, which Mr. Hutton, aided by Sir R. Giffen, pieced together into the volume which was published after Bagehot's death in 1879. Sir Robert Giffen writes that the *Economic Studies* were really "with all their incompleteness, the most important work which Bagehot left". In 1885 a "Student's Edition" was published of the two completed chapters under the title of *The Postulates of English Political Economy*,[2] with a Preface by Alfred Marshall, Professor of Political Economy, Cambridge. "I do not think," writes Sir Robert Giffen,[3] after citing other writings by Bagehot on financial questions, "anything he did in this way will compare in quality with the work in *Lombard Street* or the *Economic Studies*. His work in this respect, to use Mr. Hutton's phrase, was that of the least part of him; he was often not deeply interested in it himself, taking it only as 'all in the day's work,' to use his own phrase; but what he did was none the less considerable, enough, and more than enough, to account for his authority and reputation, and to have made a name for him as an economist alone. Even here, however, he succeeded by qualities not specially economic, by quickness to see and say the right thing because his point of view commanded so large a field. . . . I have already hinted at the infinite regret which must be felt at the non-completion of the pro-

[1] See Lord Welby's letter, p. 22, chap. i.

[2] Longmans, Green & Co.

[3] "Bagehot as an Economist," *Fortnightly Review*, 1st April, 1880.

gramme sketched out in these *Economic Studies*. No event could more powerfully suggest the notion of a life beyond life, so as to explain the mystery of so fair a work being left incomplete. . . . The fragments left are those of a grand building, the design went much farther than what we see, and that, fine and noble as the work is, it is greatly interesting as proving how much finer and nobler the whole structure would have been."

After quoting Mr. Hutton's description in his Memoir of Bagehot, from the point of an intimate friend, Sir Robert Giffen writes :—[1]

"No one who drank even for a little of the champagne of Bagehot's wide discursive talk, full of humour and sidelights on every subject he touched, will fail to appreciate this description. He was as far as possible from giving the idea of a man with a special genius for a subject and much absorbed in it. As far as my own experience goes, our business talks, though having for end and object the conduct of a political and business newspaper, always travelled much wider than the record. Not to speak of his interest in literature and philosophy, he had the keenest interest, for instance, in the essential differences of system between English and Scotch law and English and Scotch forms of local and judicial administration, a subject which grew out of some business topics in the beginning of our acquaintance; in the art of money-making, as distinguished from mere knowledge and skill in economics and the methods and subjects of business; in the working of personal motives of revenge and the like, as they affected the great game which was constantly playing before us in the City; similarly in politics, in the personal element, the personal and family relationships of our public men, which he believed to have far more effect on the course of politics and parties, and the making or marring of careers, than the outside world supposes. I only mention a fragment of the things about which he was intellectually curious, and which were yet far enough away from the special subjects before us. Nothing of this will seem surprising to the editors and contributors of

[1] "Bagehot as an Economist."

our leading journals, who know how necessary it is that the mind should play freely about many subjects to be able to choose properly a line upon any one subject; but Bagehot undoubtedly possessed the *quasi*-omniscience so necessary in the highest journalism as well as the best literature in an unusual degree, and as such he could not be primarily an economist as the world understood him. He was something very much greater—a thinker of some new ideas of great value in the science, and a describer of the modern world of business, which is so different from the world of business that existed only one or two generations ago, and which alone could be in the minds of earlier writers on political economy; and he was all this in part because the study of political economy formed only a portion of his intellectual interests. I can only echo what he [Mr. Hutton] has said in protest against the common idea of Bagehot as being primarily an economist instead of his being primarily a man of letters of strong genius and imagination, who happened, amongst other things, and subordinate to other things, viewing his literary life as a whole, to take up with 'Political Economy'."

Francis Galton writes: "I value it [*Economic Studies*] very highly, as I value all of your late husband's work, and it gives me peculiar pleasure to learn by it that some of my facts and speculations have been of interest and service to him. In reading the book, both the subtlety and accuracy of the thoughts and the clearness and cleanness from extraneous matter with which they are conveyed, make one realise afresh how great has been the loss to political science through his death. How completely he stood alone as a writer, able to raise political economy from a collection of confused and heavy facts into the status of an exact and attractive science!"

Lord Granville writes to my sister of the volume of *Economic Studies:* "I cannot tell you the intellectual pleasure it has given me, partly from its own merits and partly from the reminder it has given me of all the instruction and enjoyment I derived for so many years from your husband's writings".

The winter of 1876-7 was spent in the new house in London, Walter paying the usual fortnightly visits to Herd's

Hill, and the usual entertaining at dinner, dining out, and political evening parties taking place. From the middle of February my husband and I, our boy and his governess, were staying there. I remember one Sunday morning in March going to his study, which was high up on the third floor of the Queen's Gate Place house, because so, he said, it was "out of the fuss of the front door," to discuss with him the request Watts, the artist, had made that I should help him in his work. Every subject of interest was always talked over with Walter, and in painting and art generally I had from a child found an engrossing pleasure. He was lying on his sofa, "inventing his books" or otherwise "playing with his mind". He never showed signs of objecting to being interrupted, and was always an excellent listener. It was then, I think, that he said: "You must take me to see Watts, I should like to see the outside of the person who does these things". He had caught a chill, the precursor of his last illness. I also had a cold, but Watts had asked me to go that morning to see his work and talk over matters, and I remember Walter, with his usual thoughtfulness, insisting that I should have the carriage to go in.

Walter Bagehot never saw those curtains that William Morris was "composing". The last time I saw him alive was at Waterloo Station, when he and my sister were starting on his last journey to Herd's Hill. I had driven there with them *en route* to Queen's Square, in order to implore the poet to weave the threads into curtains, as the March winds were blowing cold through the thin lace draperies, the only protection over the windows against them. I remember well the last evening he spent "in the new toy" as he called the house. He was lying full length on a sofa under these unsheltered windows and I was sitting over the fire. I thought he was asleep, but suddenly he came out with a few very kind words, the last which I definitely remember.

During those last days he appears to have thought seriously of his state of health, though he certainly took no precautions against increasing his cold. His old college friend, Mr. Fowler, wrote to Mr. Hutton in the following April: "It seems that

Bagehot felt very poorly, for he told one of the men of the staff of the *Economist* that he did not think he should get over his cold".

Another sign that he thought his life precarious showed itself in the fact that one night, during the last week he was in London, he left his bed and, going up to his study, made his will.

He and my sister were to have left London on Tuesday morning, 20th March, but the journey was postponed till the afternoon, in order that Walter should vote for Mr. George Trevelyan at the Athenæum.[1]

I still clearly see that departing scene outside 8 Queen's Gate Place. When he started he was ill. My sister and I were in the carriage and my husband was on the pavement to see us off. Before Walter got into the carriage he turned to him to say good-bye. But there was no accustomed quaint word of fun, no life. The lamp was already burning low. For the first time the boyish spirit seemed extinguished. The journey, the long wait at Yeovil Station in the night air, made matters worse. On arriving at Herd's Hill he saw his father, who was confined to his bed, for the last time. The doctor was sent for, and found the right lung congested. Each day he became more ill. On the Friday the local doctor telegraphed for Liddon from Taunton, who found him dangerously ill; all the same, that day Walter played a game of cribbage with his Aunt Emma, Mrs. Michell, who was nursing him. On the Saturday the bronchitis was supposed to be better, and my sister lay by his side all the morning, cutting open the leaves of a new copy of *Rob Roy*, which he read. He spoke often of feeling extreme weakness, increasing as the day advanced. In the afternoon he exerted himself, moving his pillows, and when my sister tried to help him, he said "Let me have my

[1] Ten years after this fatal journey was taken, Mr. George Trevelyan wrote, when complying with a request of my sister's to vote for a friend of hers at the Athenæum: "I do not know whether you are aware how closely the voting in the Athenæum is and always will be in my memory connected with a most honoured name. Your husband, I believe, actually altered his hour of leaving London to vote for me there in that last week."

own fidgets," but called her to him, then fell asleep, breathing loud and hard. Gradually the sound quieted, till, as the sun was setting, the end came peacefully—painlessly.

Since the Tuesday we had been staying at Park Lodge, and on that evening as the sky shone gold and crimson behind the silver birches on the common, my husband, who had been waiting outside the house in Cheyne Walk the previous night to hear what news he could of our dying friend Janie Nassau Senior, came in and told us the end had come. We had had no alarming accounts from Herd's Hill, and our minds turned solely to this trouble. Rumours appeared in Sunday papers which the servants saw, but we were not told of them. It was supposed that some mistake had been made, and that it was Walter's father, not himself, who was dead. On the Monday morning, letters, telegrams and newspapers all announced the truth. On the Wednesday my sister, Mrs. Greg, my husband and myself went to Herd's Hill. The funeral took place on Thursday. A photograph exists of the simple procession as it passed through the street of the little ancient Langport town, the gig of the undertaker leading the way, which was the local fashion in those days. Langport Church was closed, being under repair, the funeral service was therefore at Huish Episcopi Church, but we returned to the spot in Langport Churchyard where his mother and brother were buried. There, looking down on the river winding along the moors to Muchelney Abbey, and away over the wide-reaching landscape, grey and chilly on that March day, we stood by the grave as he was buried. On Easter Sunday the funeral sermon was preached by the Vicar, Mr. Henslowe, the corporation of the town attending in their robes, Walter Bagehot having been their Deputy Recorder.

It seemed right that he should have returned to the old home to die. Though his life had expanded beyond its early associations, he had never lost touch in any sense with those things he had most loved and revered in his youth. Whether the rash act of taking that last journey—having regard to his health no act could have been more rash—was committed in order to reach the old home before the end, it is impossible to

say. He never spoke to us of his belief that the end was near.

In death as in life, the sense of reality hovered over everything that happened in connection with Walter during those days. Nothing seemed unnatural. As I sat by his bedside trying to make a drawing of his face, which looked tired but younger than in life, solemn as death must always be, there was no sense that he was divided from us, or that his life was ended;—it was only being continued in a different way. In his nature the spiritual and the natural had ever had equally full play. They had been interwoven from earliest childhood. He had lived to the full every moment of his life, in mind and in spirit. "All things are yours, whether the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come."

His own words come to mind.

"The nature of man is not two things, but one thing. We have not one set of affections, hopes, sensibilities to be affected by the present world, and another and a different to be affected by the invisible world: we are moved by grandeur, or we are not; we are stirred by sublimity, or we are not; we hunger after righteousness, or we do not; we hate vice, or we do not; we are passionate or not passionate; loving or not loving; cold or not cold; our heart is dull, or it is wakeful; our soul is alive or it is dead. Deep under the surface of the intellect lies the stratum of the passions of the intense, peculiar, simple impulses which constitute the heart of man; there is the eager essence, the primitive desiring being. What stirs this latent being we know. In general it is stirred by everything. Sluggish natures are stirred little, wild natures are stirred much; but all are stirred somewhat. It is not important whether the object be in the visible or invisible world; whoso loves what he has seen, will love what he has not seen; whoso hates what he has seen, will hate what he has not seen. Creation is, as it were, but the garment of the Creator; whoever is blind to the beauty on its surface, will be insensible to the beauty beneath; whoso is dead to the sublimity before his senses, will be dull to that which he imagines; whoso is untouched by the visible man, will be unmoved by the invisible

God. These are no new ideas ; and the conspicuous evidence of history confirms them. Everywhere the deep religious organisation has been deeply sensitive to this world. If we compare what are called sacred and profane literatures, the depth of human affection is deeper in the sacred. A warmth as of life is on the Hebrew, a chill as of marble is on the Greek. In Jewish history the most tenderly religious character is the most sensitive to earth. Along every lyric of the Psalmist thrills a deep spirit of human enjoyment ; he was alive as a child to the simple aspects of the world ; the very errors of his mingled career are but those to which the open, enjoying character is most prone ; its principle, so to speak, was a tremulous passion for that which he had seen, as well as that which he had not seen."

CHAPTER XVII.

TRIBUTES FROM CONTEMPORARIES.

IT was on reading letters of sympathy and articles in the newspapers at the time of Walter's death, that Mr. Bagehot first awoke to the knowledge of the high estimation in which his "greatest treasure" was held by his contemporaries. "I should never have known," he said, "how great a man Walter was, had I not survived him."

Mr. Bagehot had become deaf, and had for some years led somewhat the life of a recluse. Walter had entered into the intimacy of that life without allowing his father to draw any contrast between its limitations and his own more extended field of thought and action. Never in intercourse with any one did Walter assume superiority. No one ever left off talking with him feeling "how clever he is, how stupid I am". His discernment of character was as if inspired. He measured the nature and capacities of his companion to a nicety, and poised the quality of his intercourse accordingly. He left many with the idea that he was a good fellow, yet with no idea that he was a great man. So it is that the amplest appreciation bestowed on Walter Bagehot during his life and on the occasion of his death was expressed by those of distinguished attainments, and such tributes came somewhat as a surprise to his father.

Mr. Gladstone wrote to my sister: "Permit me also to take this opportunity of recording my admiration of his [Walter Bagehot's] great powers and unvaried industry, and my respect and high regard for his character.

"During the time when I was Chancellor of the Exchequer I had the advantage of frequent and free communication with him on all matters of finance and currency. Nor have I in

all my experience known any one from whom in this important province more was to be desired, or who was more free and genial in the communication of his large knowledge and matured reflection.

"But he seemed to be not less at home in deeper questions of political philosophy, and of human character, and in respect to these also we have sustained a loss not easily to be repaired.

"I do not presume to enter upon the more inward aspects of your great bereavement; and I beg you on no account to take the trouble of acknowledging a letter, in writing which I pay a tribute of truth and give relief to feeling. . . ."

Later Mr. Gladstone wrote: "I have to thank you for kindly presenting me the *Economic Studies* of your distinguished husband. No one, I believe, more highly appreciated than myself the satisfaction and profit which were to be derived, during his lifetime, alike from his conversation and his writings; and every posthumous memorial of him, and new proof of his extraordinary gifts, is to me, as to many more, a matter of cordial interest.

"I am grateful to you for thinking me worthy to receive such a memorial from yourself. . . ."

After reading Mr. Hutton's Memoir of Walter Bagehot, Lord Bryce wrote:—

"My dear Hutton,

"Let me, as a friend and a warm admirer of Walter Bagehot, thank you for your most interesting memorials of him in this month's *Fortnightly*. It was with no small surprise that those who knew him perceived how little the world seemed to know the loss it sustained, when his keen, bright, fertile intellect left us; and I was looking month after month for some such worthy tribute to his greatness. Is it going too far to say that he was the most interesting man in London to talk to? The man who was most ingenious in suggestion, most penetrating in complexities, most sure to give a novel form to commonplace questions, and, in a certain sense, in spite of the occasional love of paradox, most fair in judgment?"

After re-reading a volume of these Biographical Studies, Lord Bryce again writes :—

"This I have done with an ever-increasing admiration for the wonderful acuteness, ingenuity and fertility of mind which appears in all the essays. There seems to me to be nothing at all comparable to them in the literature of this generation ; and the acuteness is so entirely without bitterness, the tone throughout is so elevated, that one feels better as well as wiser every time one peruses them again. I do trust you will continue to publish what still remains, believing that everything he wrote on topics not purely temporary, is of permanent value to the world."

Lord Thring wrote to my sister :—

"I know no man whose loss will be more keenly felt not only by his friends, but by the business world in general. He had the rare faculty, to my mind the best test of ability—of making abstruse subjects clear to ordinary understandings. I always think that a man is a master of his art in proportion as he can dispense with its jargon, and no writer with whom I am acquainted has dealt so much as your husband with technical details with so little technical phraseology."

Mr. Bonamy Price, Professor of Political Economy, Oxford, writes :—

"The public loss is heavy indeed, for writers of his power and the acquaintance with the realities of human life are most rare. You have the consolation of knowing that many grieve along with you."

Henry Fawcett wrote :—

"There was scarcely any one whose friendship I more valued, and I am sure there is hardly any one who could be so ill spared. I shall always look back to the hours I spent with him when we were examiners together at the London University as one of the most pleasing remembrances of my life."

Sir Robert Giffen writes :—

"It is a great shock to me after all the debt I owe to him both for instruction and for taking me up, and I am quite sure I can never have such another friend. I am most sorry for

you indeed, although it must be a consolation to think that few men's lives have been so full of noble labour, and in all respects so worthily filled up. It seems so poor a thing in such a calamity to write expressions of condolence, but as I perhaps knew more of Mr. Bagehot's work than any one outside his own family, I feel as if I ought to convey to you a sense of the great impression he made on all in contact with him in his work.

"I have had intimate relations since 1877 with not a few of our prominent public men but never one with quite the gifts and brightness of your husband or so likeable in every way. The pleasantest time of my own life was the period of my association with him, and there has really been nothing else to compare with it."

Lord Avebury wrote :—

"I have long admired and respected him, but I had not realised how much affection I had for him".

Lord Carnarvon writes of the *Economic Studies* as the last work and the latest instruction of one whose loss both from a public and private point of view he will not cease to deplore.

Bernard Cracroft wrote to my sister, Mrs. Greg :—

"I had such a genuine and unfeigned admiration for his genius and talent, it is quite a painful blank to me to think I shall never again hear his peculiar humour and his subtle disquisition. I was—unlike as we were—quite fond of him—and would have gone a great distance out of my way for the mere pleasure of being 'quizzed' by him—which he always did with a singular absence of all that could give the least pain, and yet it was always, however trifling, worth attending to. Poor Janie Senior in the morning—and Bagehot the same evening, two of the most marked individualities in the country—both in the prime of life—both as stêrling as fine gold—it is very saddening for those around them."

Mr. Kelligrew Wait wrote :—

"For myself I can truly say I have felt my friend's loss very acutely. His was the only real schoolboy friendship that ever endured, and I believe his feeling towards me—as mine to him—was very warm and sincere.

"Besides the tie of friendship, which neither time, distance, nor difference of life or occupation affected, I somehow felt a strong *personal* pride in the distinguished position he had obtained, and I was ever looking forward to what the future might have in store for him. I have constantly felt humiliated that I, content to live a life of mediocrity, was able to step into Parliament without difficulty, while he, by a strange perversity, could not obtain a position for which he was so remarkably adapted, but also where his talents would have been so eminently useful to his country."

Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff wrote:—

"It is a great public as well as a private calamity. I do not remember any moment on record in English history when we could so ill spare a man of such high and exceptional ability." After referring to "the production of his mature and exquisite genius" Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff adds: "He has his niche in the Temple of Fame amidst the best and wisest of his age and country".

These are but a few of the tributes tendered by Walter Bagehot's appreciators at the time and after his death.

In worthy fame, there is assuredly a lustrous, abiding glory. A monument it is that earns praise for those who raise it no less than for those to whom it is raised. Though thirty-seven years have passed since that March, 1877, there is still no lack of living witnesses—witnesses who count—to testify to Walter Bagehot's genius. To his work and to his wisdom is accorded its reward. The world has pronounced.

Some there are, however, to whom this fame which the world can accord, seems but a cold, inanimate memorial when compared to the warmth of feeling treasured by those who loved him as a friend. The exact nature of the talisman which inspired so rare an affection, it is scarcely possible to put into words. Cite all the virtues in the world, you could not carry home to those who did not know him the choice quality of Walter Bagehot's influence over those closest to him. The grace of that day which is gone cannot be passed on. There always must remain, say what we may,

. . . one grace, one wonder, at the least,
Which into words no Virtue can digest.

Letters from two life-long friends written at the time of his death may reflect somewhat of the depth of feeling which Walter Bagehot could inspire.

T. Smith Osler wrote :—

"One man does not often say he loves another, I can say it of very few, but I can of Walter Bagehot. And besides that, of all the men I have known with anything like intimacy he was the single one of whom I could say with certainty that his individual mark was left upon the thought of his time. His talk—when one had him alone—was the purest intellectual pleasure I ever had. He went so straight to the heart of the question—you were so sure of fresh light—and he was so matchless in discussion as contrasted with dispute. The mere love of truth was always sufficient to sustain his animation without any thought of display or victory. The last long *tête-à-tête* I remember was some six years ago in a walk over Wimbledon Common. But the sense of such talks is a hundred times fresher in my mind than the talk of the scores of ordinary men of whom the world is so full. And I know too his sound, warm heart and sterling integrity from his youth up, and am proud to think that I too may claim in a humble fashion to have been his friend. It is true that I did *love* Walter besides admiring his genius and holding his character in the highest esteem. I daresay there may not be very many who knew how much warmth there was with all that clear light—how much of the truest tenderness with all that unerring perspicuity of glance and brilliancy of expression. But those who have felt its charm can never forget the impression he made. I have known the touch of his affectionateness more than once in my life—both in joy and in sorrow, and on the intellectual side, I repeat deliberately, that converse with him in the days when we were thrown together and when talk was preceding life, was the highest intellectual pleasure I ever reached. Every remark of his was so clear and pertinent and yet came from such a depth below the surface—the whole bearing and relation of every thought was

so completely and rapidly seized, that you advanced miles with him where another man would only have taken you yards. Nor was that all. The first thing I knew about him when he was not long emerged from boyhood was an act of great moral courage—and he carried his integrity with him to the quiet end. What a comfort it must be to look back upon a peaceful falling asleep without a struggle or a pang—only it came too soon, and when we might have looked for many years of ripened wisdom and beneficent life."

Richard Hutton, who of all his men friends loved him the best, wrote :—

"This blow seems almost more than one can bear, my dear Mrs. Bagehot. I don't know why I was so stupidly confident he was getting better. . . . I can hardly see for the heaviness of my head and heart at this crushing blow, though I know I ought to be thinking chiefly of you, and indeed am thinking of you very much, and very, very painfully. It is the snapping of a hundred threads all together—I hardly know where I am or what it all means. The world changes so, I don't feel equal to life in it. . . . I must try and write something about him in my own paper,[1] which will be a very painful effort. God help me! Did Bagehot tell you that this day week I told him he was looking so young and well, I could hardly believe he was my contemporary at all. I was *feeling* old and haggard, and I was wonderfully struck by his bright, fresh look. Tell his father from me, how very much he was to me. The dreariness of this day is terrible to me—I am afraid I am hardly myself. Yours was a much closer tie, but mine was an older one.—Well, he is in better keeping than ours.—God bless you, and help us to bear all we may have to bear."

The next day Mr. Hutton wrote :—

"I was sure his death must have been due to a failure of the heart. But it is very little use our trying to find these artificial consolations. The pain is all the same. I shall never see him again here, and I hardly know how to bear it, I am still quite stunned."

[1] The *Spectator*.

Very few of us are now left who picture him thus, more as the intimate friend than as the wise author of books. Happily for some of these few, albeit their sun is nearing the horizon, his home is still their home, the Herd's Hill, so beloved by his parents and by him from his childhood. There it is, ever recalling to memory that vivid life associated with them. There are the walks, the lawns from which his father opened vistas through the branches of the elm trees to "further beauties beyond"; to a sight of that little river Parret—a blue ribbon winding amidst the damp of green moorland meadows;—to the view of the church towers, aged, noble sentinels, rising steadfast amidst a vaporous landscape. There still is the steep pathway, the short cut that Walter would shoot down in all haste to catch his train, a lovely pathway branched over by the big arbutus tree, brilliant in winter with crimson strawberries and white bell-flowers, and by the wide spreading lime-tree, bright yellow-green, and the copper beech, cornelian scarlet in the spring, purple crimson in the summer, their trunks buttressed against a steep bank of primroses and moss; the views over the moors to the Quantock and Mendip Hills; to the mound in the moors marking the place where Alfred the Great burnt the famous cakes. All these things still are there as we wander on those lawns; and round us still hover living associations with those three to whom they were so dear.

Places themselves become monuments through the force of the memories attached to them.

> In my spirit will I dwell,
> And dream my dream, and hold it true;
> For tho' my lips may breathe adieu
> I cannot think the thing farewell.

APPENDIX.

A TRIBUTE BY LORD BRYCE.

On the same day of the week and at the same hour, thirty-nine years after Walter Bagehot died, Viscount Bryce delivered the following tribute to his memory on the occasion of the unveiling of the tablet placed on the house in which Walter Bagehot was born :—

Even at a time like this, when our thoughts are particularly fixed upon the events of the terrible crisis through which the world is passing, and chiefly upon the omens which we are glad to discover of the approach of what we trust may be a complete victory (cheers), even at a time like this it is fitting we should remember those illustrious men whose genius has been an honour to our country, and who have conferred upon us benefits by their thoughts and writings, the fruits of which we are still enjoying. And it is eminently fitting that such illustrious men should be commemorated by some visible sign or token in the town or county where they lived, that there should be something to remind those who reside in the place of famous men who went before and stir them to emulate notable predecessors. Such a man deserving well to be commemorated was Walter Bagehot, to whose fame and memory we are met to pay a tribute to-day. His was certainly one of the finest minds of his generation. It was a great and remarkable generation. It was a generation that included Charles Darwin, Tennyson, Lord Kelvin, Clerk Maxwell, and Huxley; a generation which included John Stuart Mill and many another thinker we remember; a generation which on the continent of Europe included such men as Helmholtz, Ranke, and Mommsen, and in France, Pasteur, Taine, and Fustel de Coulanges, to name only men belonging to the sphere of science and letters. If I named men famous in

politics and discovery I should enlarge the list too much. It is not too much to say that he stands in the front rank of a generation which included such men. (Cheers.) He had an eminently original mind. He was a man who never left a subject where he found it. He had always something new to add to that which his predecessors had accumulated. His was a mind of considerable delicacy and subtlety. It used to remind me, in listening to his talk, of a steel blade, keen, polished, strong, and flexible. It was also an exceptionally fertile mind, shooting out ideas with perfect ease, so that you always felt—you felt it in reading his books and in listening to his conversation—that there was plenty more where that came from. There was no appearance of his exerting himself to be original and brilliant. Originality and brilliance came upon him as easily as the soil throws up flowers in spring. It was also an extraordinarily active mind; it never seemed at rest. There was a characteristic phrase in which he said he liked "to play with his mind". It gave him pleasure to produce and give forth ideas, letting them flow out in the most natural and informal way. And his mind was also—and this, I think, is a point with which I ought to deal a little because it is somewhat special to him and somewhat unusual in the work of literary men—it was a singularly scientific mind. I mean he applied the methods which are applied by the scientific investigator with the same exactness and critical discrimination. The same care in observation and logic in deducing results from what he observed, which belongs to the province of a great scientific discoverer. This was due, I think, to his having an extremely keen observation, an ability to note small facts of which other people had not realised the significance. He was scientific also in this sense, that in handling subjects on which many of his predecessors had gone on repeating old terms and formularies, he sought for actualities. He looked right down into the thing itself, and saw what it essentially and really was. He saw the human phenomenon, moreover, in motion as well as at rest. People have often forgotten that they were not dealing with mere figures of human beings, and that the way of getting at human

society is to get at the individual man and see what are the motives and influences that move and sway him and direct his course. Human society was to him not a set of figures in a wax-work, but a moving group, everybody influencing everybody else. He was much aided, no doubt, in reaching this essentially new and instructive point of view by the effect of the scientific discoveries going on in his time. He was not, as far as I know, a systematic student of science or history, but he was one of the first to apply scientific principles to the study of economic questions. His remarkable book on *Physics and Politics*, like his famous work on the British Constitution, may be said to mark the beginning of an era in our way of handling political subjects. Everybody who has written about the British Constitution since is under an obligation for much that has become so familiar that perhaps the writer does not know it was due to Walter Bagehot. I might illustrate that by his book called *Lombard Street*, and by the miniature studies which occasionally appeared in the periodical press. In that way he was the author of a new departure in studies that belong to political science. You may compare him with such an illustrious Frenchman as Tocqueville was eighty years ago, and perhaps even with the great name of Montesquieu. Bagehot was a practical man, as the Chairman has reminded you. He was engaged in banking when living here, and in London was in constant touch with the financial community in what we hope will remain, in spite of the War, the financial centre of the world. (Cheers.) The practical experience was of incomparable value to him. He would have been a great and a pioneer mind in any case, but I am sure he would not have made such valuable contributions if he had not studied the phenomena in his daily business. His was a mind which was always bent on finding the principles underlying the daily facts in the operation of banking and finance, and it was because he had grasped the practical things and had the logical power to discover principles that his contributions to economic science are so valuable. I do wish most earnestly we had more minds at this moment like his to deal with those extraordinarily difficult economic prob-

lems with which we are now confronted. If he were alive to help us it would be worth hundreds of millions to this country. Men with a discernment like his, who see how financial difficulties of an unprecedented kind can be dealt with by getting at once to the principle underlying the whole machine, can render that service, although unfortunately they are not always available at the moment. It is very rarely you have a mind at once great in the spheres of theory and practice—to find anyone who has the wide vision and the power to correlate principles and at the same time the practical good sense and judgment which enables him to be a successful business man. Plato sighed in vain for a time when kings should be philosophers or philosophers should be kings. (Laughter.) That time had never come, and no one sets such an example as Walter Bagehot set. He was the inventor of Treasury Bills, in full operation at this moment, and by means of which, I believe, a very large part of the National Debt has been recently raised. There was an old system of Exchequer Bills; it was inconvenient and rather puzzling to the ordinary man. Bagehot saw there was a much simpler method that would appeal more to the ordinary man, because it was not like the bills with which he was familiar. He brought this to the notice of the Treasury, and the result was this new system was adopted, but never was it worked on so vast a scale as during last year. The same gifts I have endeavoured to delineate will be found also in his purely literary and biographical work. Although much has been written since of famous men, what he wrote was so fresh and original that it still can be read with pleasure and advantage. He enjoyed the study of men in the same way as the botanist enjoys the study of trees and plants. He had not only a keen observation, but a very active imagination, and it was by his imagination and sympathy he was able to find his way into the human character and give a more lively and pleasant interpretation than had been given before. There was one other gift I must mention —a gift very rare amongst scientific men. He had a great deal of humour and an exceedingly brilliant wit. It was perfectly spontaneous, and this enabled him to see things in re-

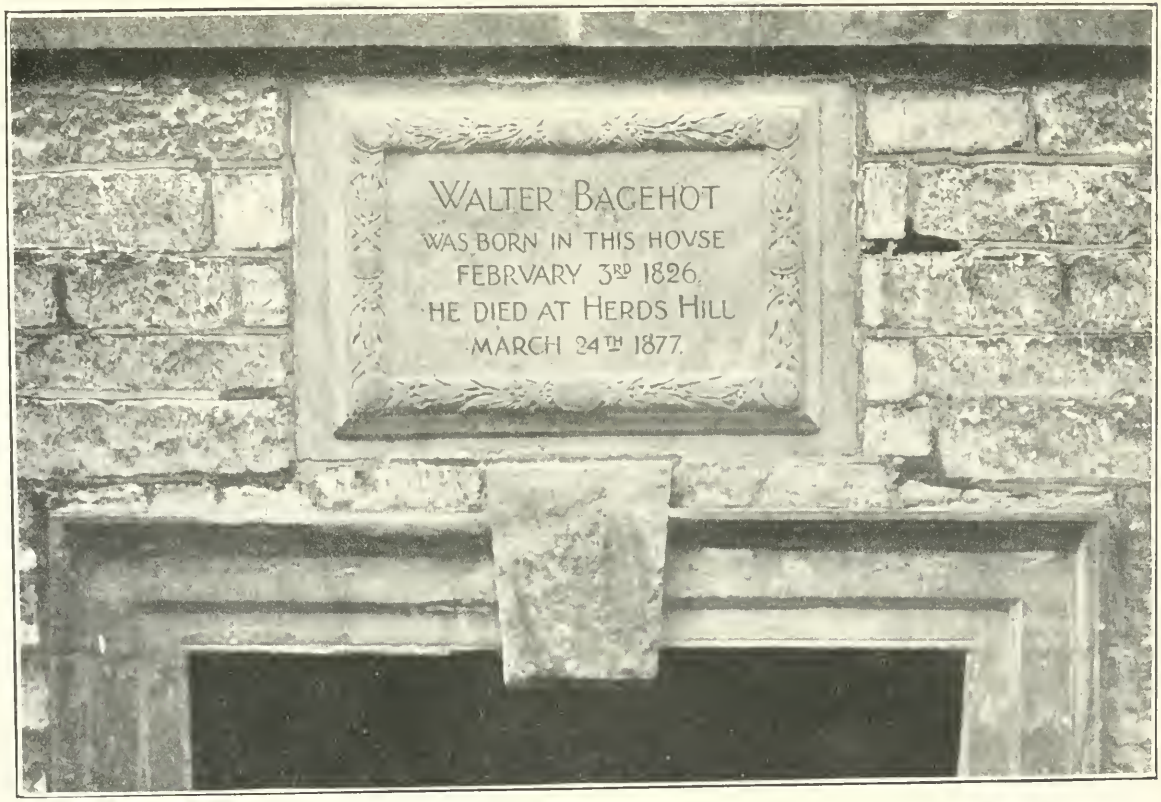
lations which had struck nobody else. It is this that makes his books so readable. People used to pour ridicule on the dreary subject of political economy. Thomas Carlyle called it the "dismal science". Nobody can call economics in Bagehot's hands a "dismal science". It is instinct with the life of the time. It was the sparkling display of wit that gave his conversation such a charm. In his time he was one of the three or four best talkers in London, although London then contained a remarkable number of interesting men. His conversation had a quality of its own. He was always ready to receive as well as to give, although he had far more to give than nine hundred and ninety-nine men had to give back to him. He had the gift of stimulating others to be at their best. That made conversation go pleasantly. And he was never malicious. He would scorch a fallacy but spare its author. I never discovered in him any sign of literary ambition. He wrote because he was interested and liked to give out his thoughts. He was perfectly natural and simple, and was found to be one of the truest and most affectionate friends. His extraordinary powers were recognised in his lifetime by comparatively few—those who studied with him at college, a few bankers and financiers who knew him personally, and a few who used to meet him at the Quarter Sessions in Somerset, old Mr. Dickinson among the number. The historian, Mr. E. A. Freeman, constantly used to talk about Walter Bagehot, and stated that one of the things that took him to the Quarter Sessions was the chance of meeting him there. Now his fame has spread over English-speaking lands and in France and Germany and Italy. In all, the leading spirits have recognised the service he rendered to science and learning. Nowhere has that recognition been warmer and more general than in the United States, and one of the most just and warm tributes paid to his services was paid in an essay published some time ago by the President of the United States. (Cheers.) I have often heard him speak of Walter Bagehot. In all the literature on political and economic subjects which has appeared in the United States—a literature which is larger than amongst us—there is no single book that does not

bear some trace of Bagehot's influence. Students of political science there look upon him as having inaugurated a new era in the study of the subject. I should like to acknowledge my own indebtedness. All the admirers of his writings and those friends who still remain who recollect his personal charm, which they cannot forget—all these will rejoice to think that this memorial of him is set up here in the county of Somerset, among whose worthies he will always hold a leading place. (Cheers.)

The company, leaving the Town Hall, adjourned to the Bank House, opposite, where Viscount Bryce unveiled the tablet, saying: "I now unveil this memorial tablet to an illustrious citizen and commend it to the tender care of the inhabitants of Langport".

The handsome tablet, which is of Ham Stone, was designed by Mrs. Russell Barrington. It bears the following inscription in red lettering, surrounded by a border of bay leaves in relief:—

WALTER BAGEHOT
WAS BORN IN THIS HOUSE
FEBRUARY 3RD, 1826.
HE DIED AT HERDS HILL
MARCH 24TH, 1877.


WALTER BAGEHOT
WAS BORN IN THIS HOVSE
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HE DIED AT HERDS HILL
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Page 469, col. 2, line 2 from foot, *for* Dickenson, Robin *read* Dickinson, Robert.
,, 471, ,, 1, line 6, *for* Enquirer *read* Inquirer.
,, 472, ,, 2, ,, 2, *delete* Howell, Lord, 160.
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